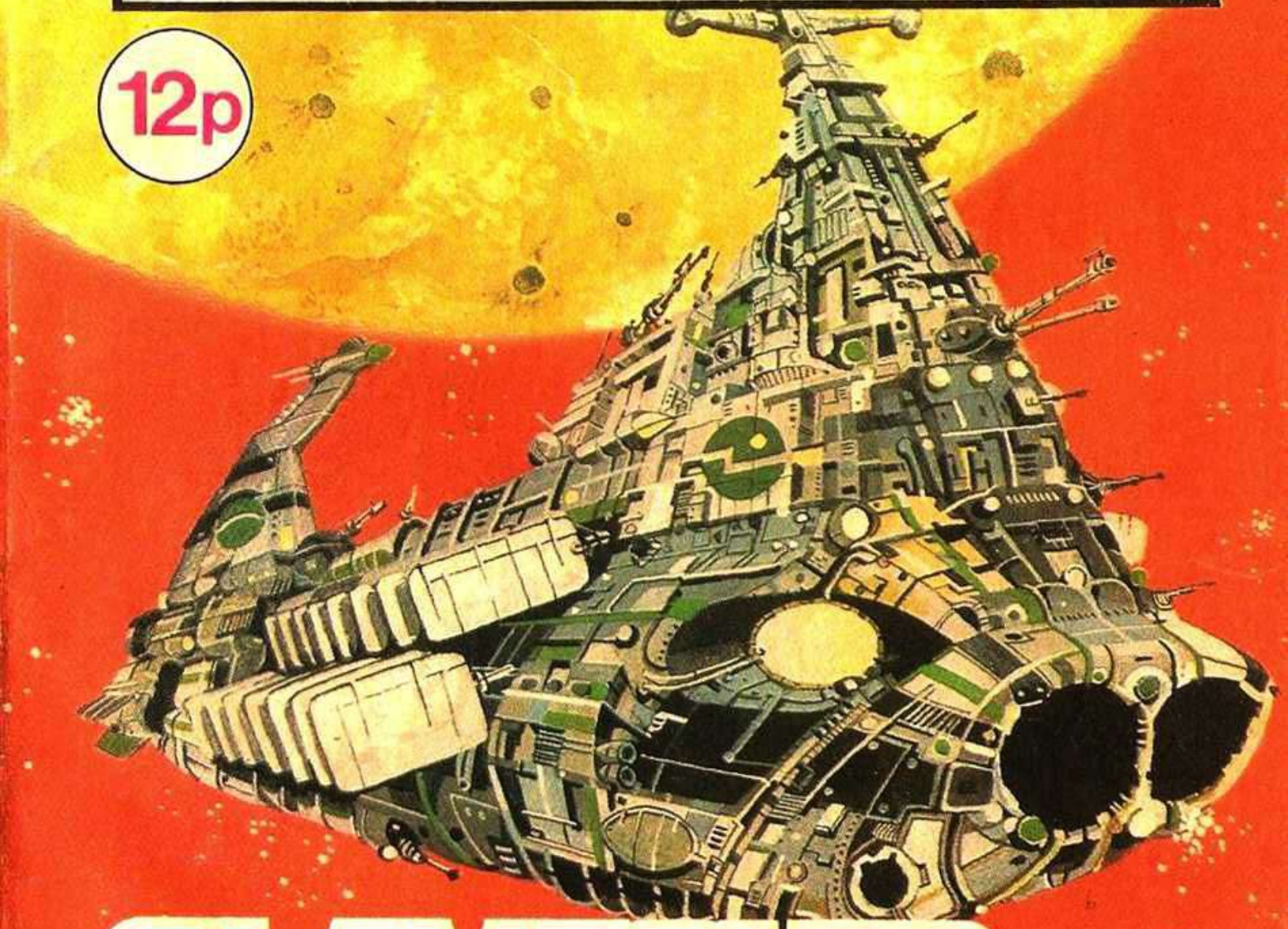
STARBLAZER

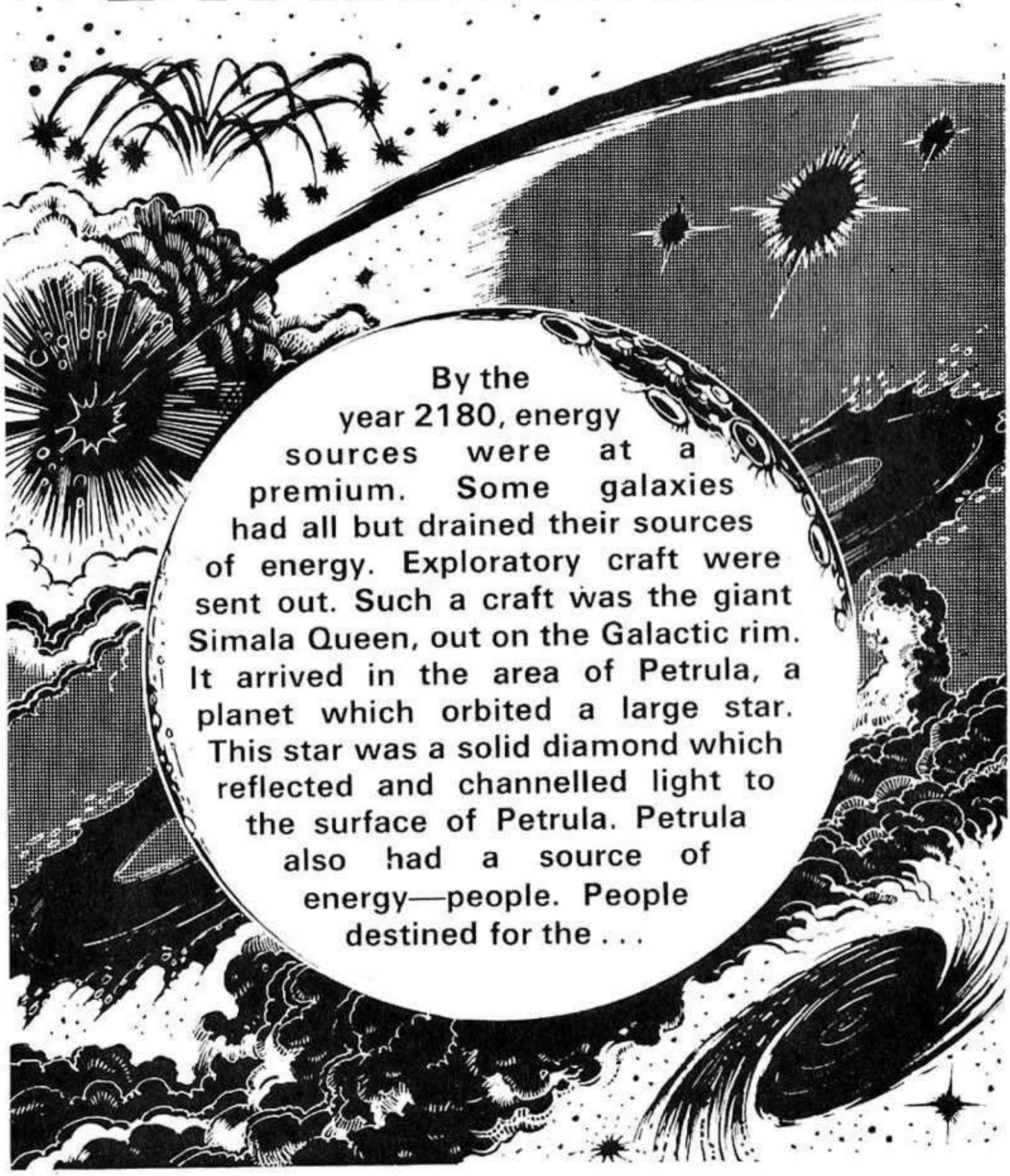
SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 23

12p



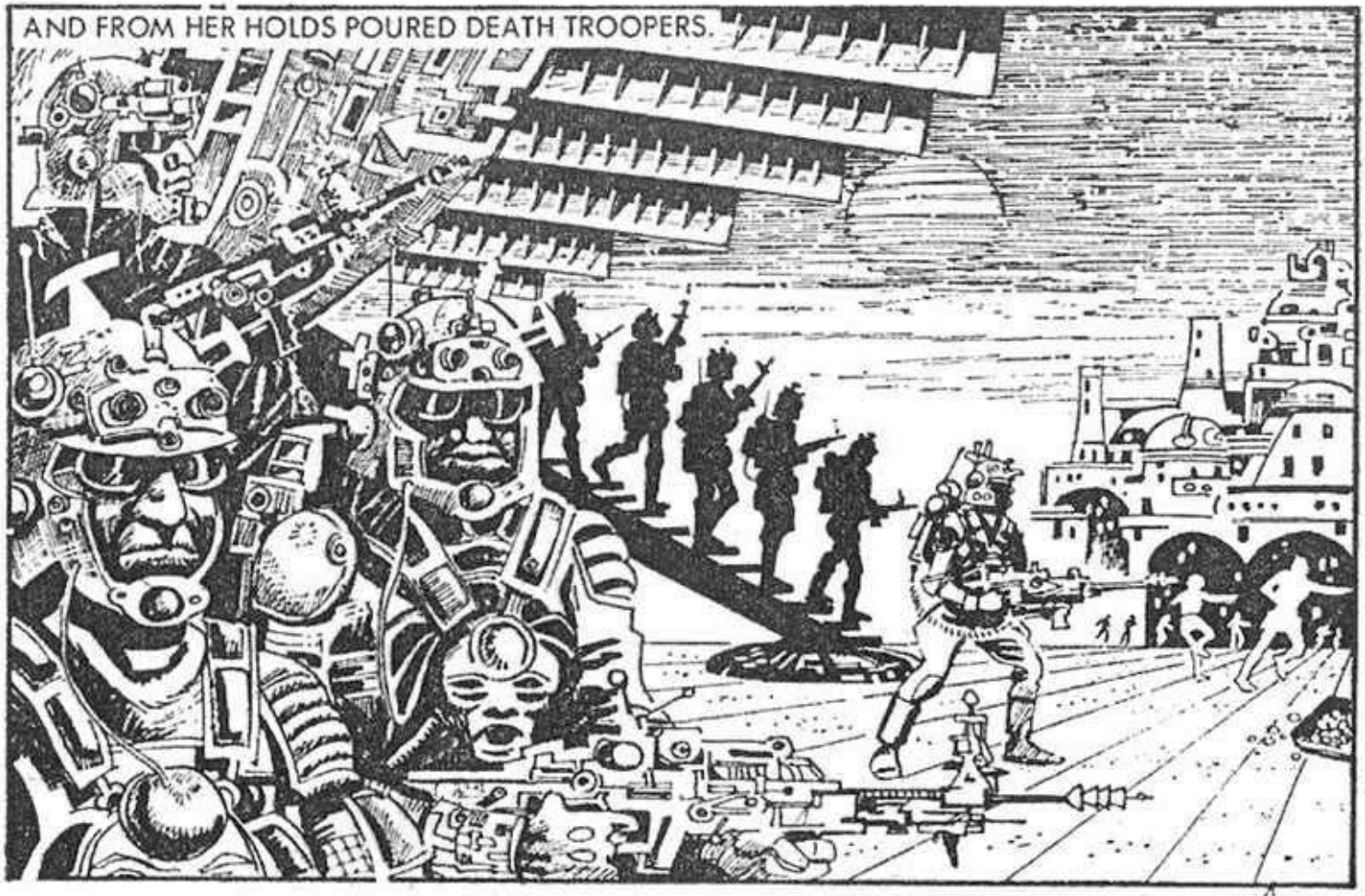
SLAVESHIP OF SIMALA

STARBLAZER



By the year 2180, energy sources were at a premium. Some galaxies had all but drained their sources of energy. Exploratory craft were sent out. Such a craft was the giant Simala Queen, out on the Galactic rim. It arrived in the area of Petrula, a planet which orbited a large star. This star was a solid diamond which reflected and channelled light to the surface of Petrula. Petrula also had a source of energy—people. People destined for the . . .

SLAVESHIP of SIMALA


AND FROM HER HOLDS POURED DEATH TROOPERS.

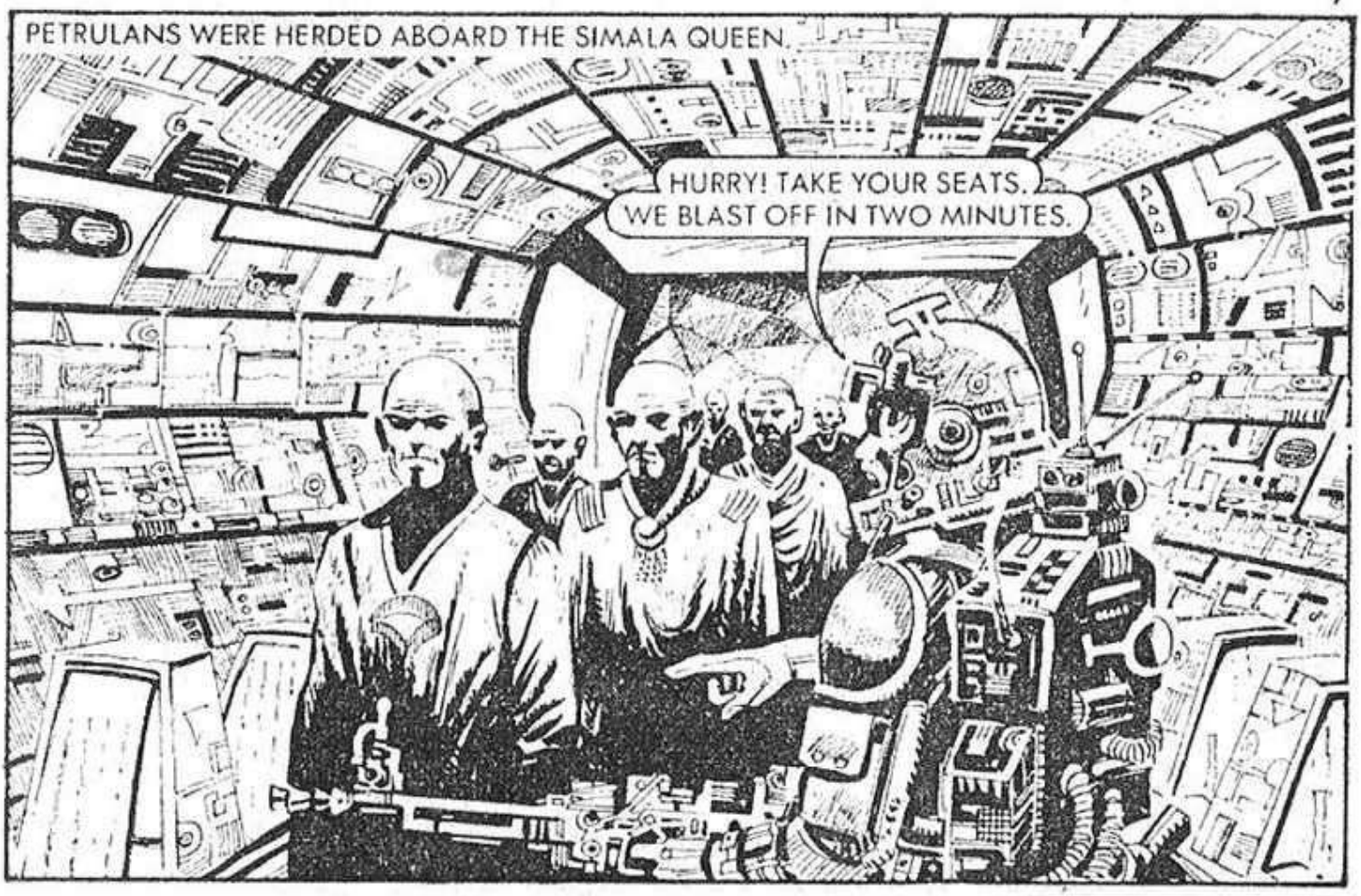
IT WAS EITHER SURRENDER OR DEATH FOR THE PETRULANS.

STOP THIS KILLING! WHAT DO YOU WANT OF US?

THE KILLING WAS NECESSARY. WE MET WITH RESISTANCE. WE OF SIMALA WISH TO SET UP A NEW ENERGY SOURCE. YOUR PLANET IS HONOURED TO BE THE CHOSEN PLACE.
BUT MY PEOPLE . . .

WE ARE MERELY TAKING THEM TO A PLACE OF SAFETY. IT WILL BE DANGEROUS HERE WHEN WE SET UP OUR ENERGY PLANT.
BUT THEY DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE . . .

HOW DARE YOU SUGGEST THAT THEY DO NOT WANT TO GO? ANY MORE RESISTANCE AND I SHALL HAVE TO EXECUTE A FEW . . . .
TTTM!ooo


PETRULANS WERE HERDED ABOARD THE SIMALA QUEEN.
HURRY! TAKE YOUR SEATS. WE BLAST OFF IN TWO MINUTES.

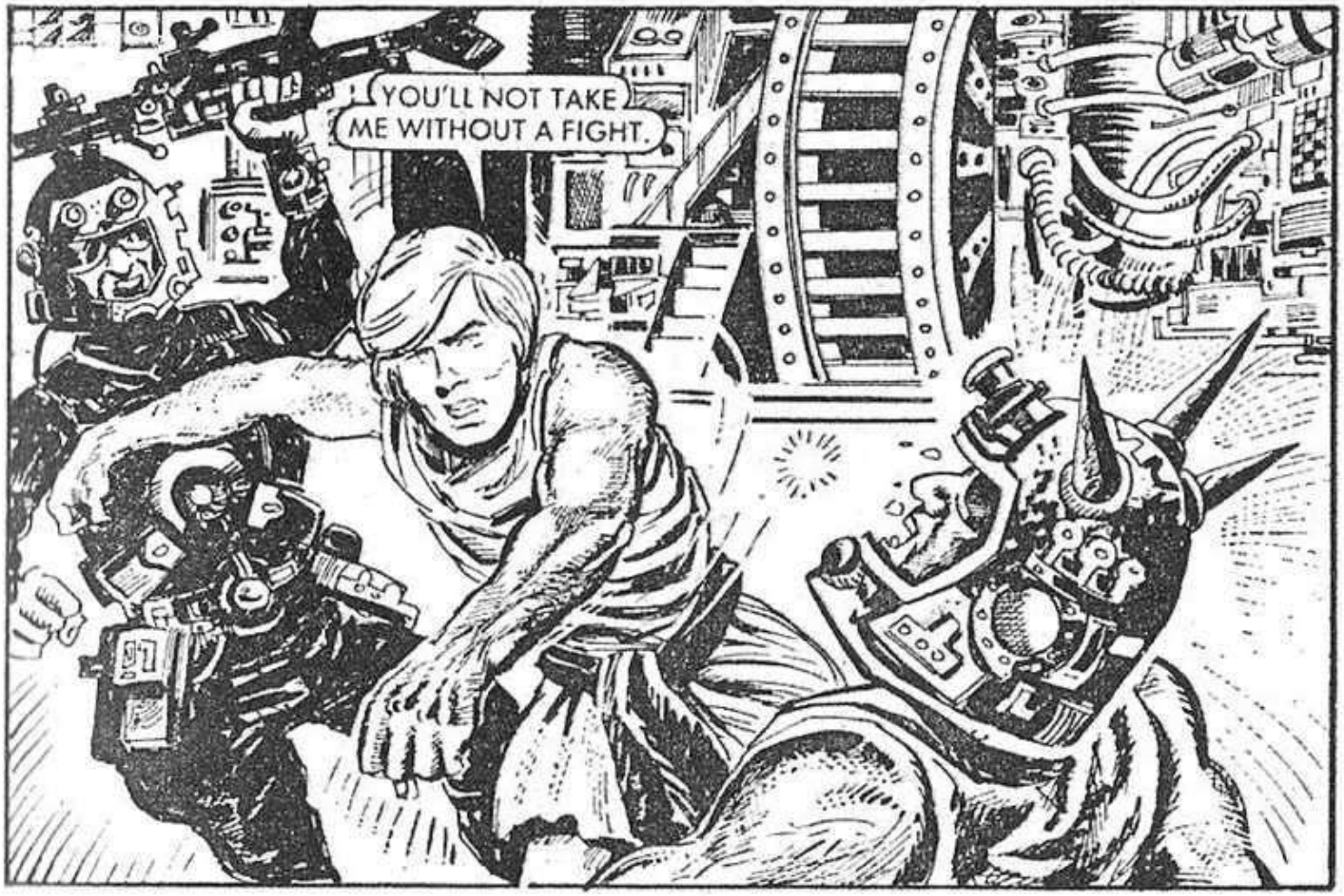
KING IRUN WATCHED THE SHIP DEPART.
WHAT COULD I DO? THESE SIMALA WOULD HAVE DESTROYED US—I HAD TO LET SOME OF MY PEOPLE GO.

THE HORRIFIC TRUTH OF THE SIMALA QUEEN WAS SOON REVEALED.
YOU ARE TRAPPED BY LASER BANDS. TAKE A HANDLE, SCUM, AND TURN IT SO THAT THE SUN'S RAYS FLOW THROUGH THE SOLAR PANELS.

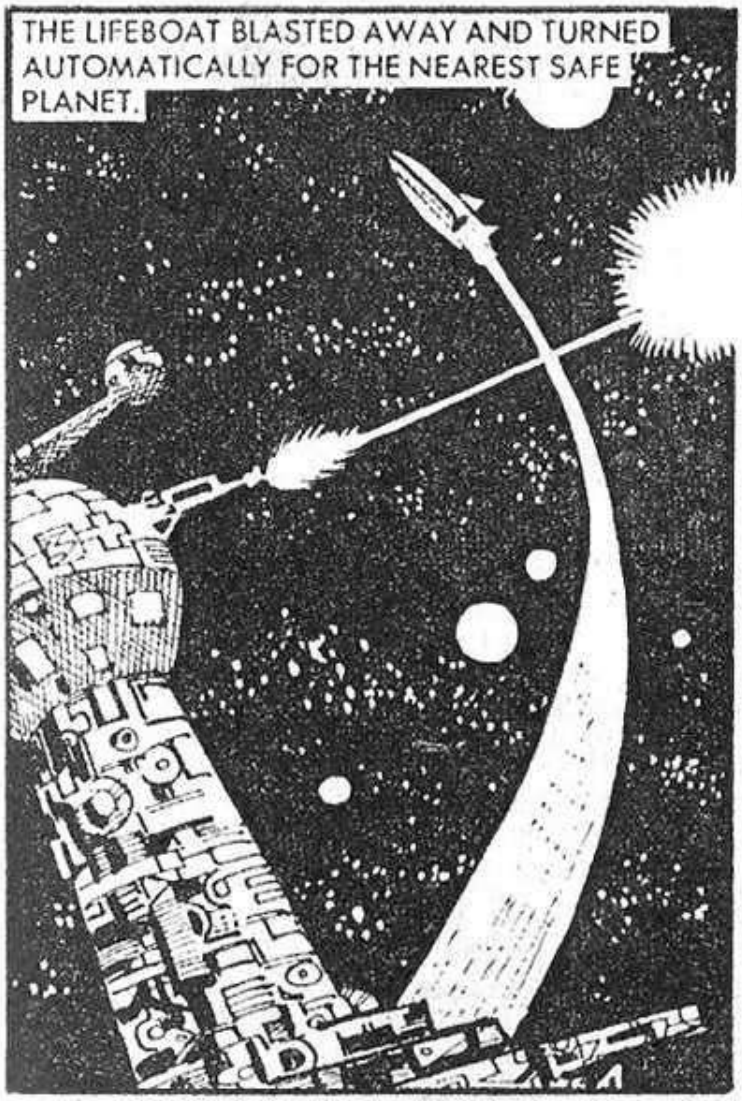
SUPPLIES OF CRYSTALS TO POWER THEIR FLEET WERE RUNNING OUT, SO THE SIMALA HAD TURNED TO SOLAR POWER—AND NEEDED SLAVES IN THEIR SHIPS TO WORK THE NEW SYSTEM.
TURN THOSE PANELS!

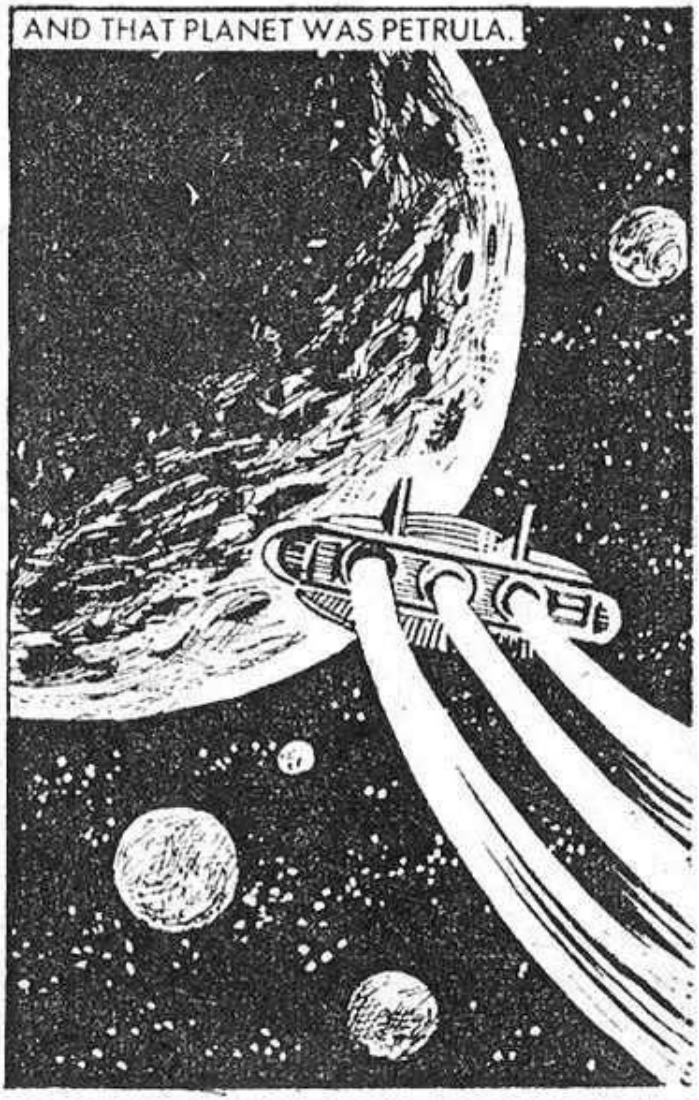
WATER! PLEASE GIVE US WATER.
SILENCE! YOU WILL BE PUNISHED FOR DARING TO SPEAK WITHOUT BEING ASKED.

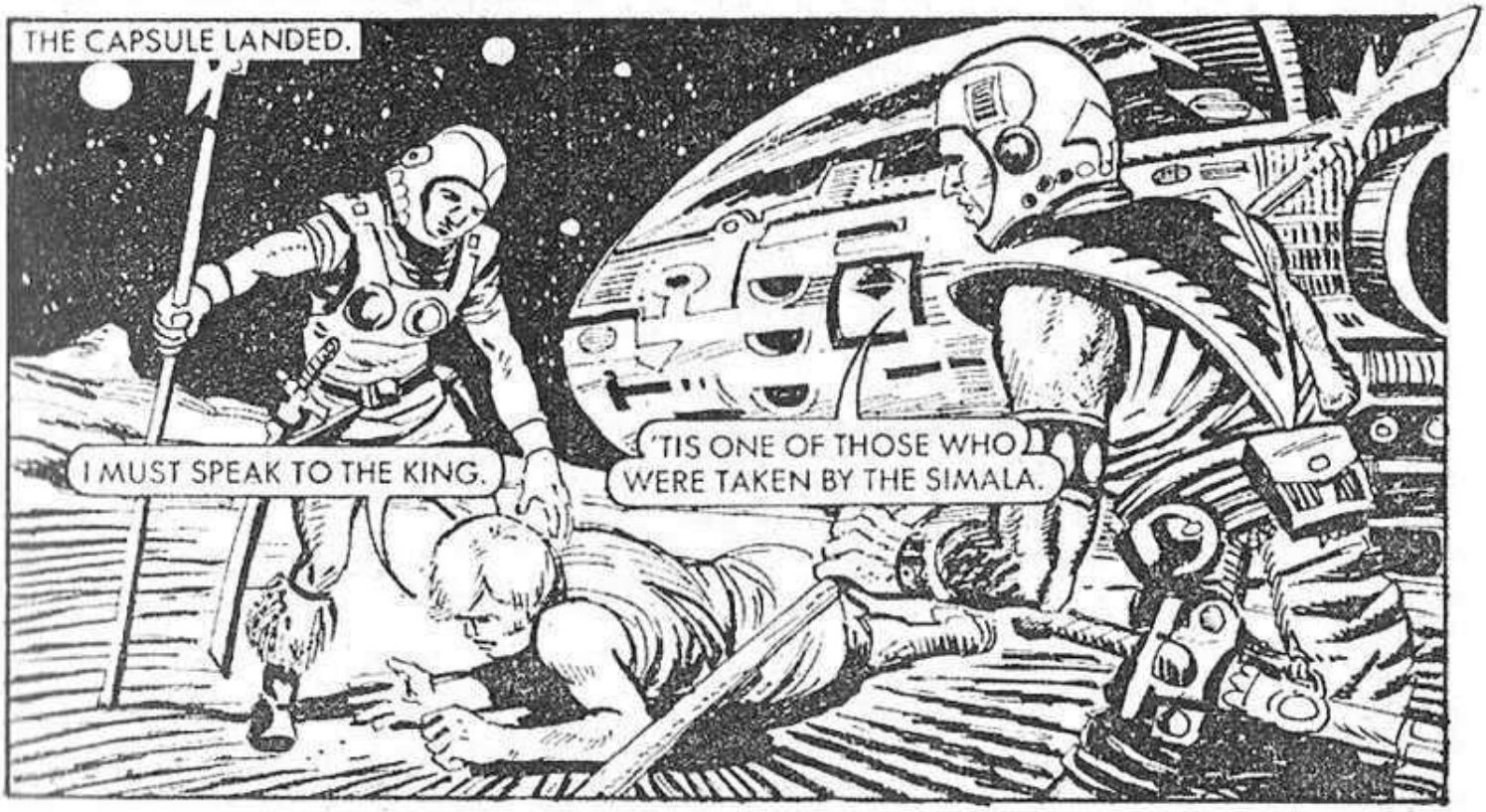
IT'S THE WHEEL FOR YOU!
THE WHEEL WAS A TREADMILL WHERE SLAVES HAD TO TURN THE WHEEL OR BE VAPOURISED BY A CURRENT THAT COULD ONLY BE KEPT LOW ENOUGH BY THE TURN OF A WHEEL.


YOU'LL NOT TAKE ME WITHOUT A FIGHT.

THE ESCAPER FLUNG HIMSELF INTO A LIFEBOAT TUNNEL.

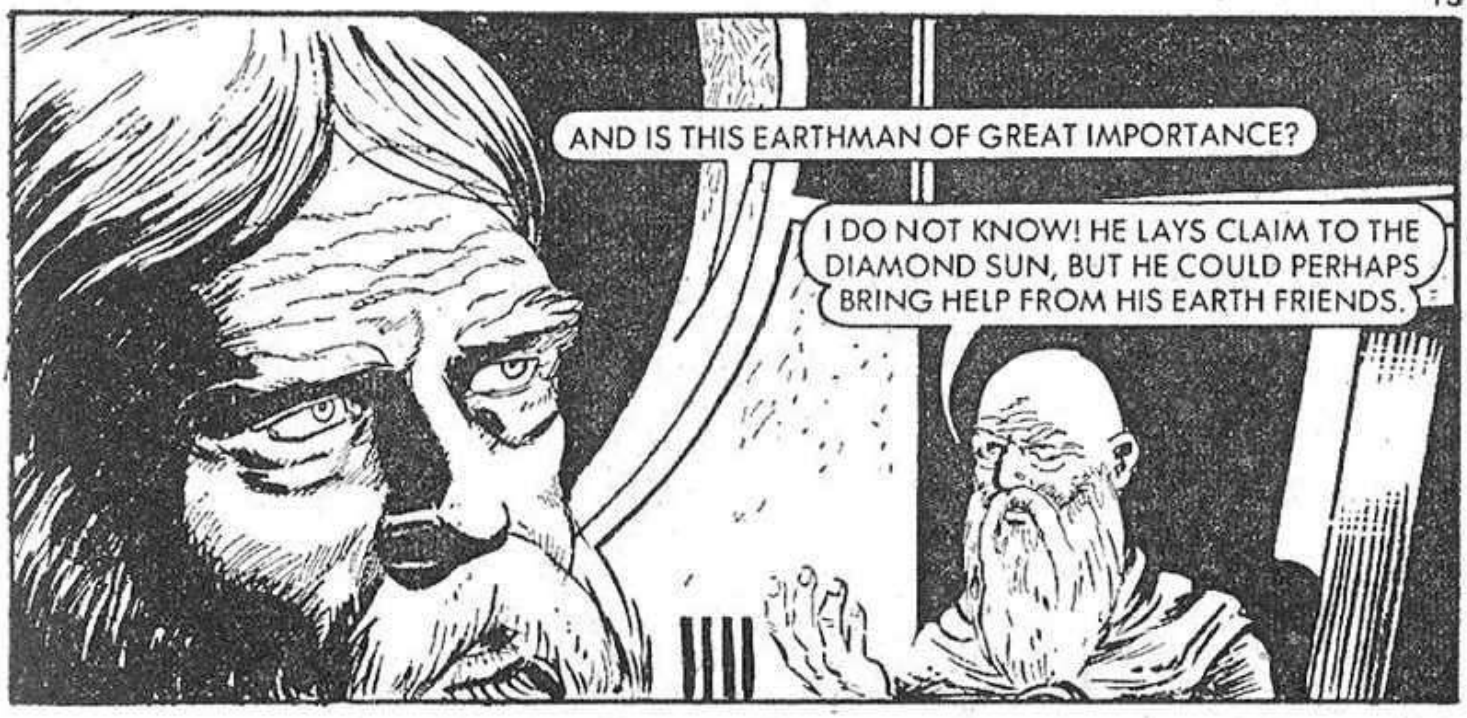

THE LIFEBOAT BLASTED AWAY AND TURNED AUTOMATICALLY FOR THE NEAREST SAFE PLANET.


AND THAT PLANET WAS PETRULA.


THE CAPSULE LANDED.
I MUST SPEAK TO THE KING.
'TIS ONE OF THOSE WHO WERE TAKEN BY THE SIMALA.

THE ESCAPED SLAVE WAS TAKEN TO THE KING.
. . . SO THAT IS THE TRUTH, MY KING.
YOU ARE A BRAVE LAD . . . BUT I FEAR THERE IS NO ONE ON THIS PLANET WHO CAN STAND UP TO THESE SIMALA.

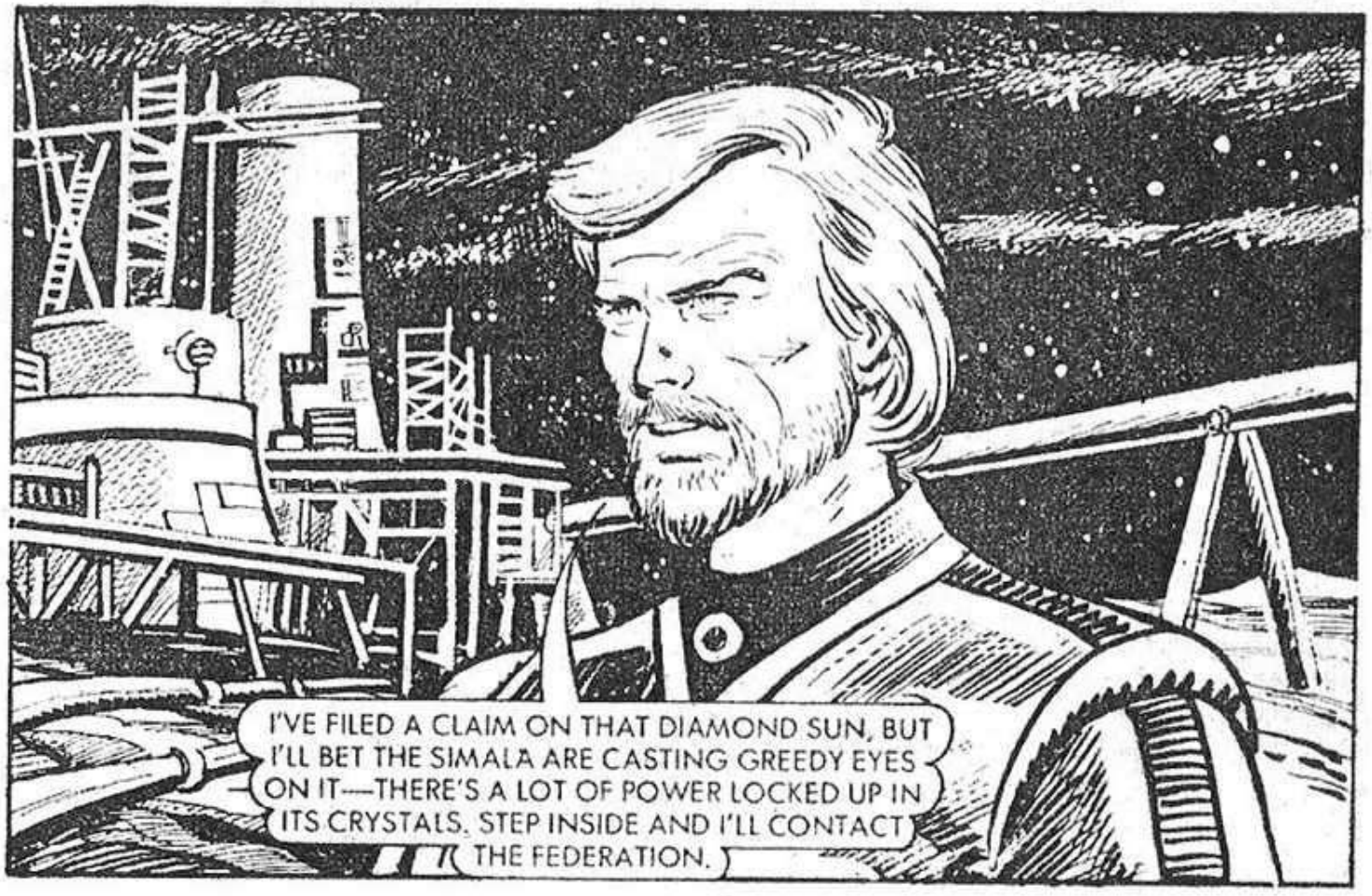
. . . THERE IS A MAN ON THIS PLANET—A PROSPECTOR FROM EARTH BY THE NAME McFLYNN.


AND IS THIS EARTHMAN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE?
I DO NOT KNOW! HE LAYS CLAIM TO THE DIAMOND SUN, BUT HE COULD PERHAPS BRING HELP FROM HIS EARTH FRIENDS.

THE SIMALA RETURN! THEY ARE TAKING EVERYBODY.
CALL OUT THE GUARD. PASS THE WORD THAT ALL MY PEOPLE MUST RETREAT TO THE HILLS.

YOU MUST FIND THIS EARTHMAN WHO MIGHT HELP US. GO QUICKLY . . .

McFLYNN WASN'T DIFFICULT TO FIND—HE WAS ALWAYS PROSPECTING AT HIS CLAIM.
. . . I AM A COURIER FROM KING IRUN—IN HIS ROYAL NAME WE ASK THAT YOU INSTRUCT YOUR EARTH FRIENDS TO HELP US.
THOSE SIMALA ARE TAKING SLAVES TO HELP RUN THEIR SHIPS, ARE THEY? THEIR POWER CRYSTALS MUST BE RUNNING LOW.

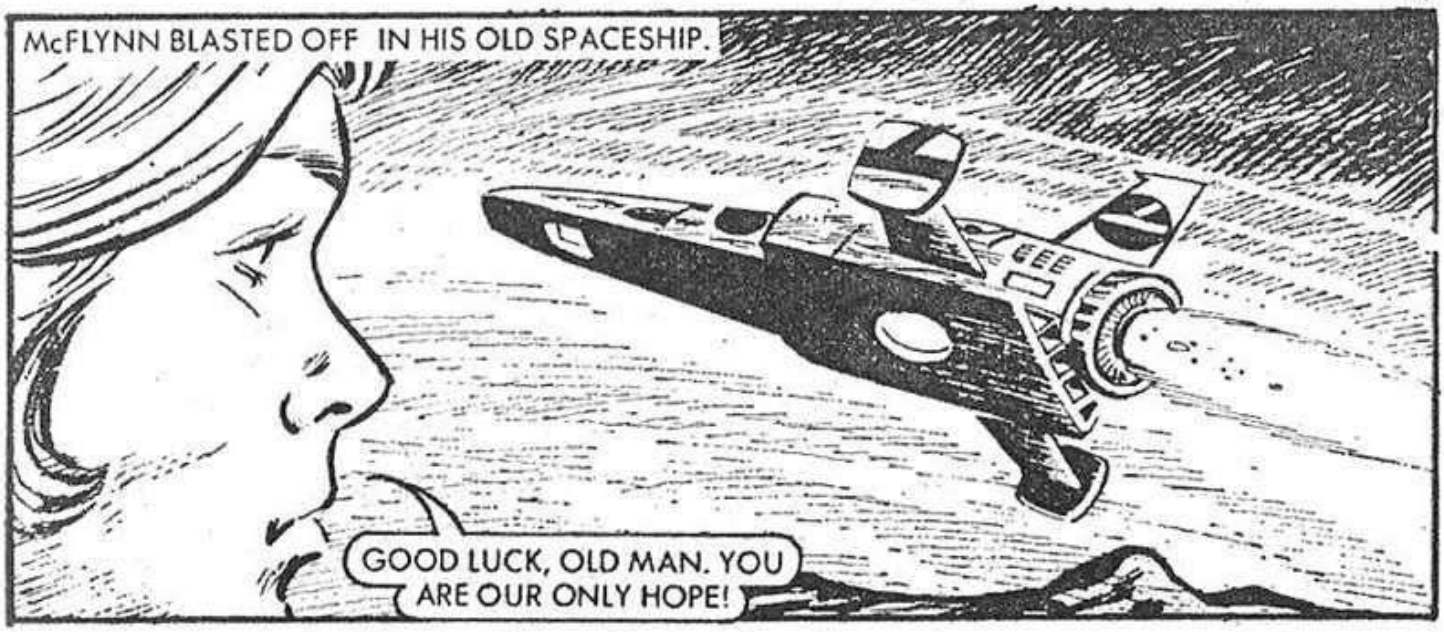

I'VE FILED A CLAIM ON THAT DIAMOND SUN, BUT I'LL BET THE SIMALA ARE CASTING GREEDY EYES ON IT—THERE'S A LOT OF POWER LOCKED UP IN ITS CRYSTALS. STEP INSIDE AND I'LL CONTACT THE FEDERATION.

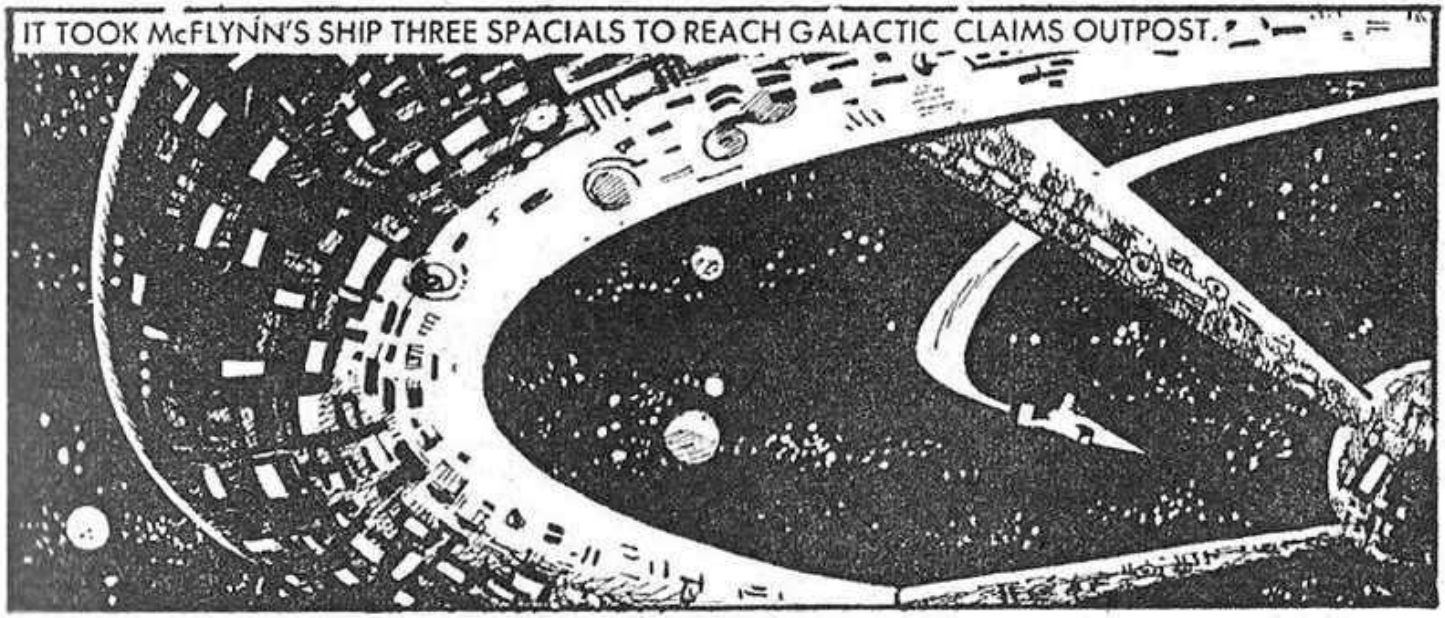
. . . AND THESE SIMALA ARE TRANSPORTING A WHOLE CIVILIZATION INTO SLAVERY.
McFLYNN, YOU KNOW WE ARE TOTALLY COMMITTED TO THE FEDERATION WAR. WE HAVE NO BATTLECRUISERS WHICH COULD BE DIVERTED TO PETRULA.

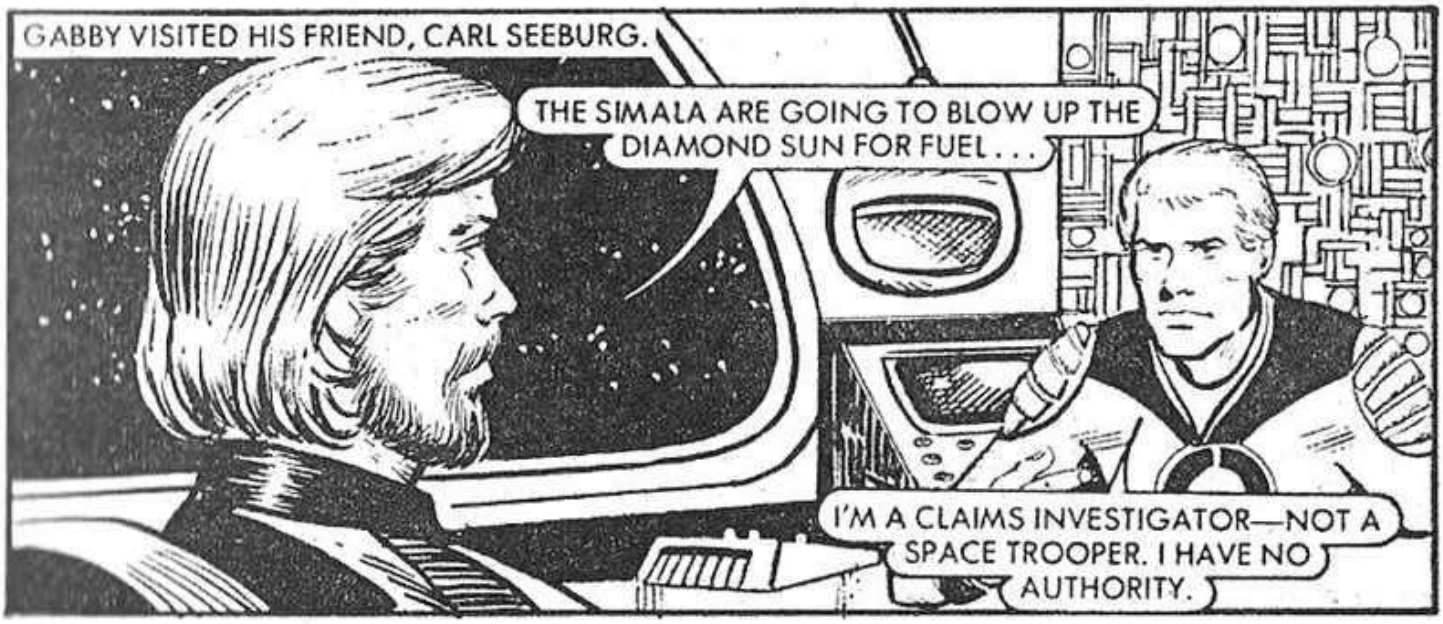
SO THE FEDERATION WILL NOT HELP US.
THEY CAN'T! THEY'VE GOT ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT! I'VE GOT A CLAIM ON THIS AREA AND I KNOW A VERY GOOD FRIEND IN THE CLAIM BUREAU WHO MIGHT LEND A HAND.

WHAT'S THAT BEAM?
I DON'T KNOW—BUT I AIM TO FIND OUT.

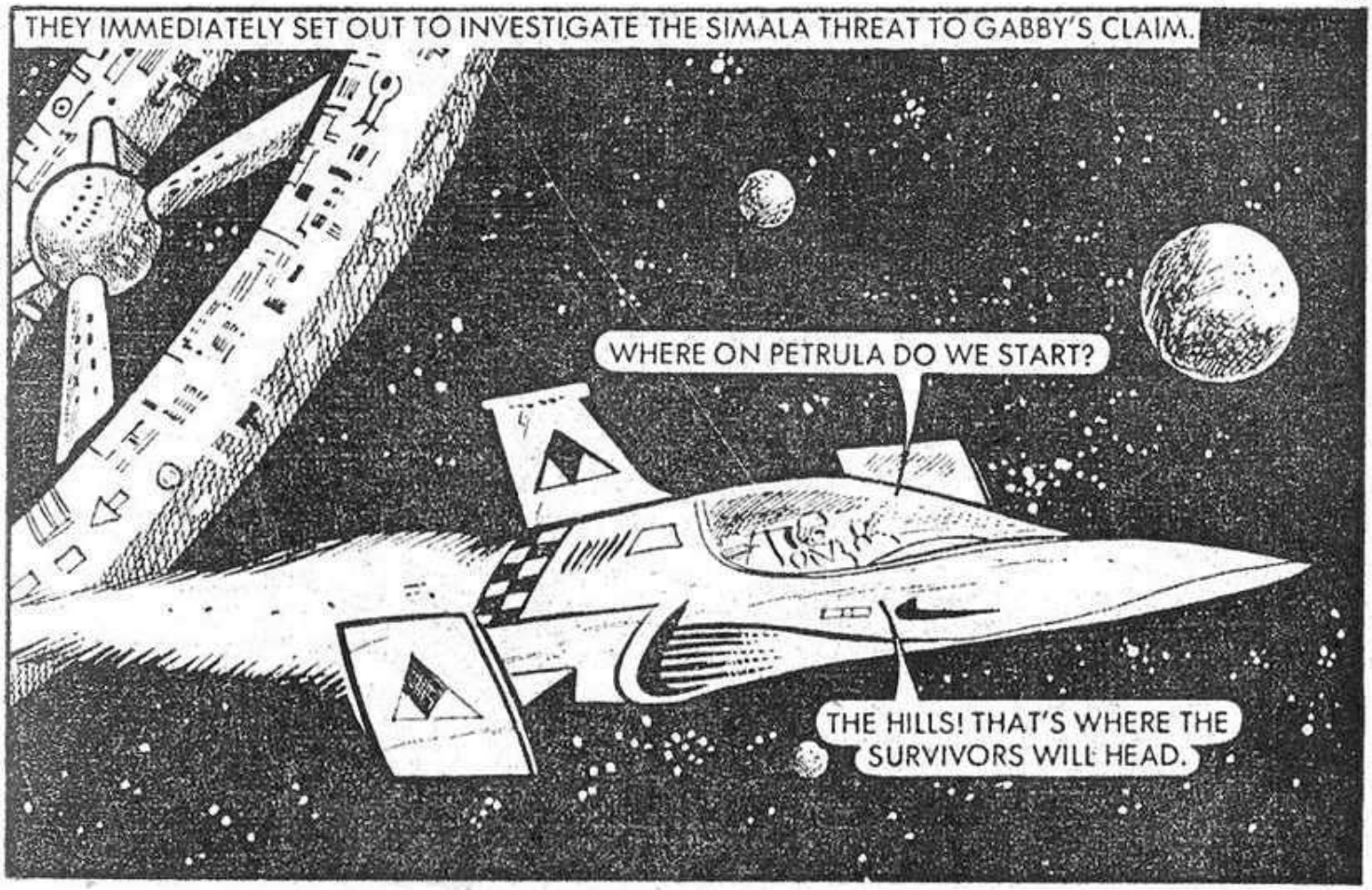
McFLYNN AND THE PETRULAN CRAWLED CLOSER.
THIS WARPER WILL SOON SHAKE THAT SUN TO BITS . . . THEN WE SHALL HAVE ALL THE FUEL CRYSTALS WE NEED FOR TOTAL CONQUEST.
A WARPER . . . I'VE USED THEM IN MINING . . . IT'S A SONIC TUBE THAT LITERALLY SHAKES A ROCK TO BITS. COME . . . I'VE A JOB TO DO.


McFLYNN BLASTED OFF IN HIS OLD SPACESHIP.
GOOD LUCK, OLD MAN. YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE!


IT TOOK McFLYNN'S SHIP THREE SPACIALS TO REACH GALACTIC CLAIMS OUTPOST.


GABBY VISITED HIS FRIEND, CARL SEEBURG.
THE SIMALA ARE GOING TO BLOW UP THE DIAMOND SUN FOR FUEL . . .
I'M A CLAIMS INVESTIGATOR—NOT A SPACE TROOPER. I HAVE NO AUTHORITY.

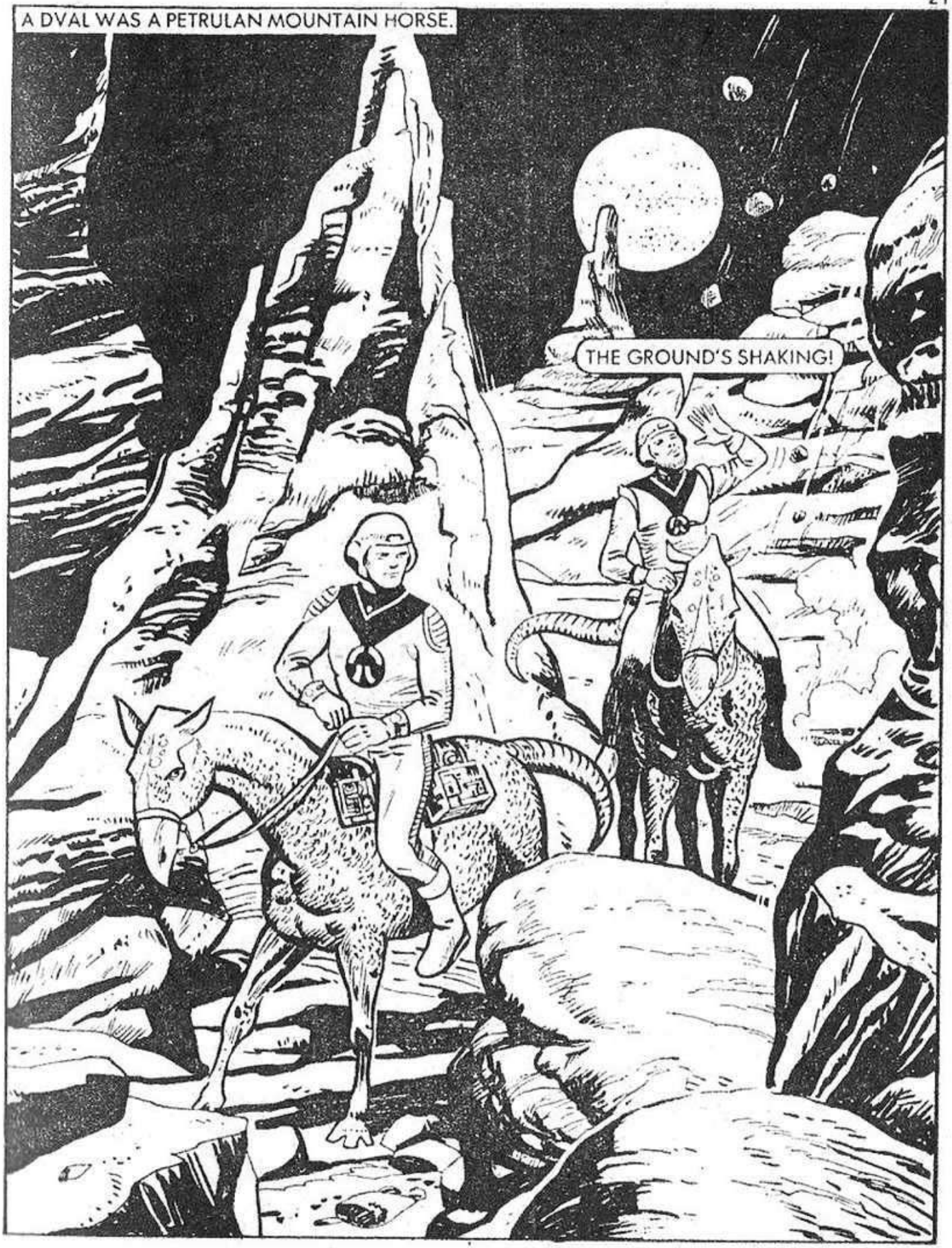
GABBY, YOU'RE AN OLD FRIEND, BUT THE FEDERATION IS FIGHTING A WAR. THEY HAVE NO SHIPS TO SPARE . . .
I KNOW, BUT THOSE SIMALA HAVE JUMPED MY CLAIM. I FOUND THAT DIAMOND SUN TWENTY YEARS AGO.
CLAIM-JUMPING. NOW, I HAVE AUTHORITY THERE—AND IF IT HAPPENED TO BE NEAR PETRULA . . .


THEY IMMEDIATELY SET OUT TO INVESTIGATE THE SIMALA THREAT TO GABBY'S CLAIM.
WHERE ON PETRULA DO WE START?
THE HILLS! THAT'S WHERE THE SURVIVORS WILL HEAD.

CARL'S SHIP HAD HYPER SPEED CAPABILITY, AND IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THEY TOUCHED DOWN ON PETRULA.
IT LOOKS AS IF WE'RE TOO LATE.
THEY SLAUGHTERED THOSE WHO FOUGHT BACK. THE SIMALA TOOK THE REST ON BOARD THEIR SLAVESHIP.

YOU MENTIONED A BEAM! WHERE IS IT?

FURTHER UP IN THE HILLS. YOU'LL NEED A DVAL TO GET UP THERE.
WHAT'S A DVAL?

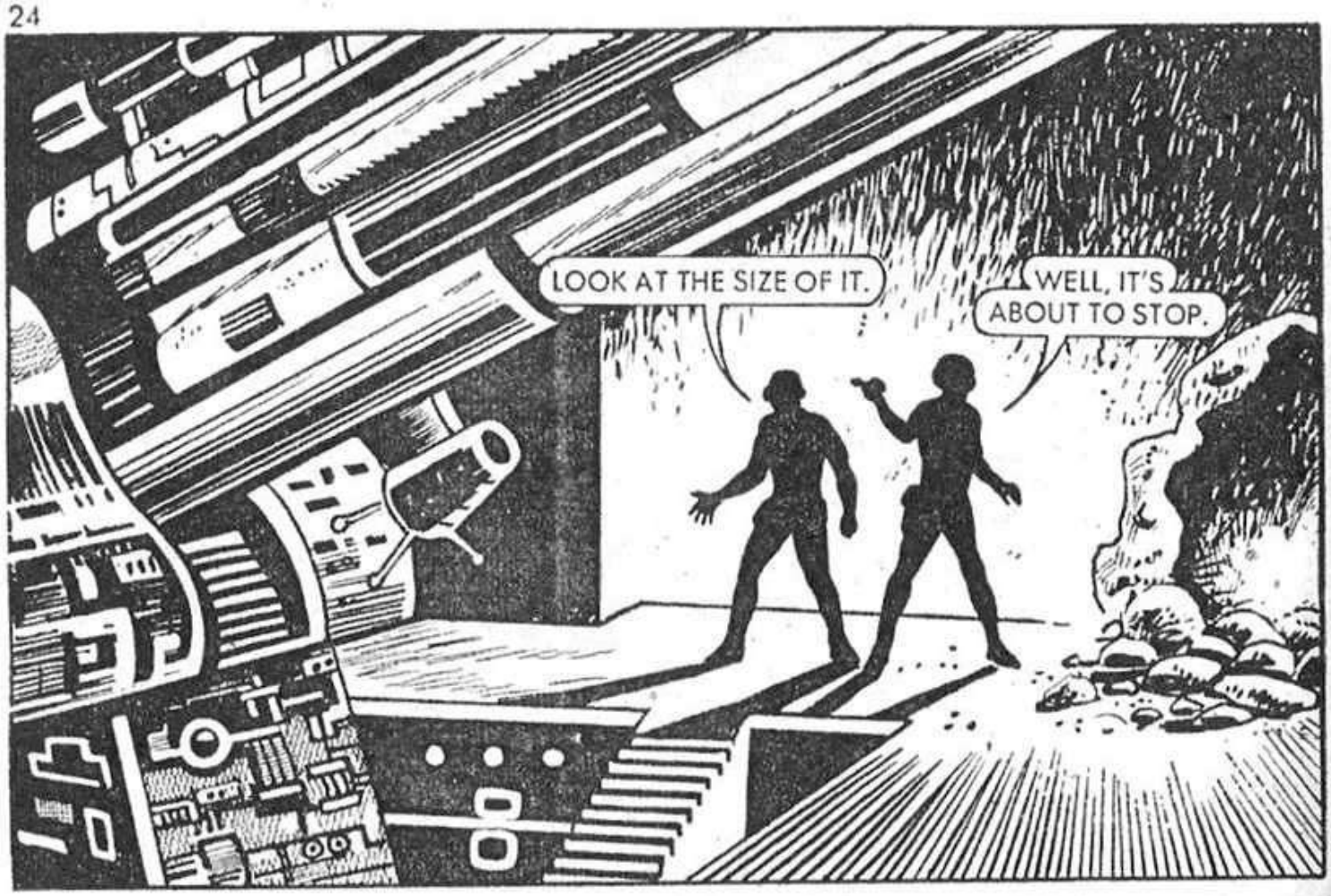

A DVAL WAS A PETRULAN MOUNTAIN HORSE.
THE GROUND'S SHAKING!

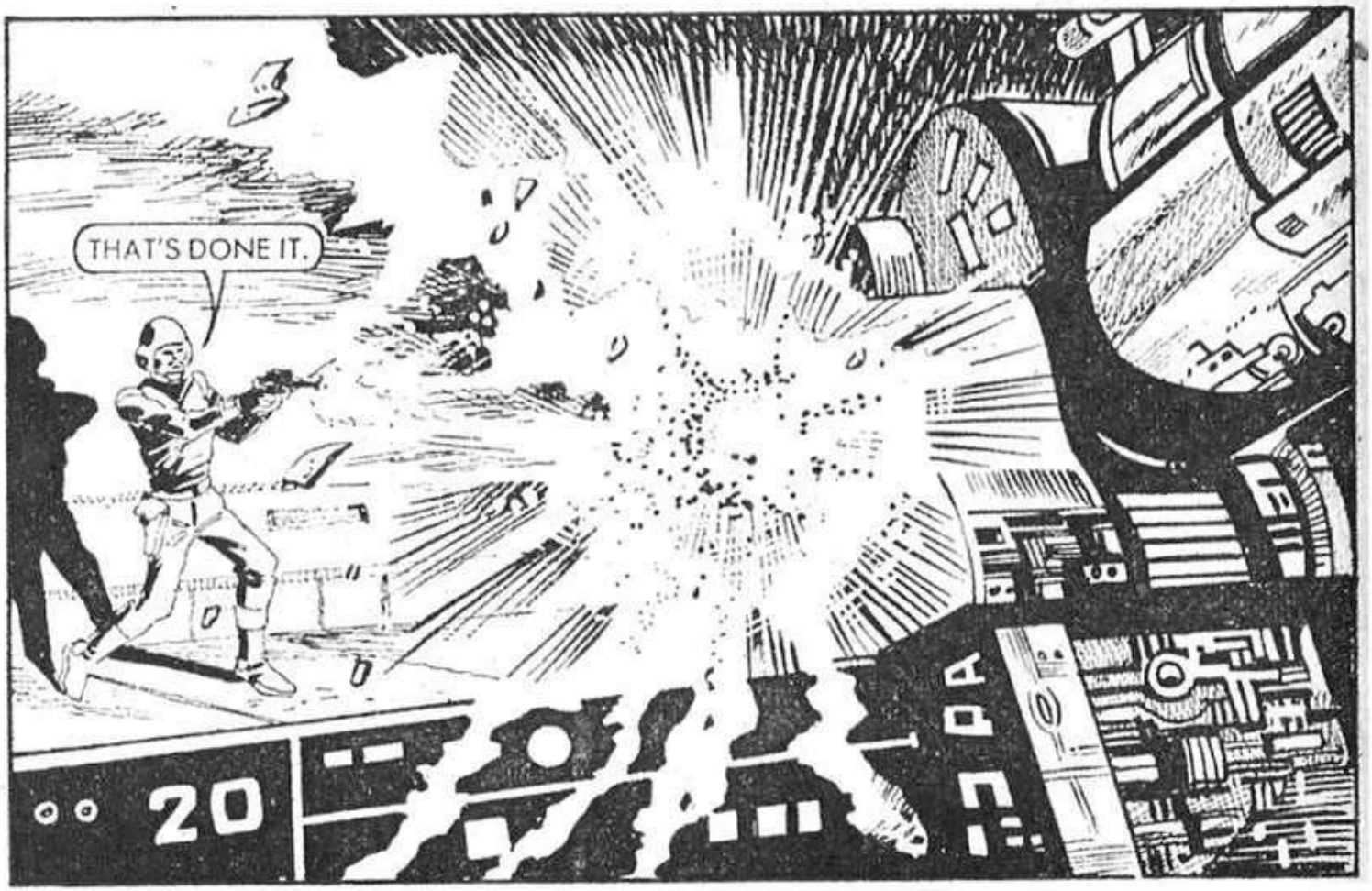
WE'VE GOT TO STOP THAT MACHINE!

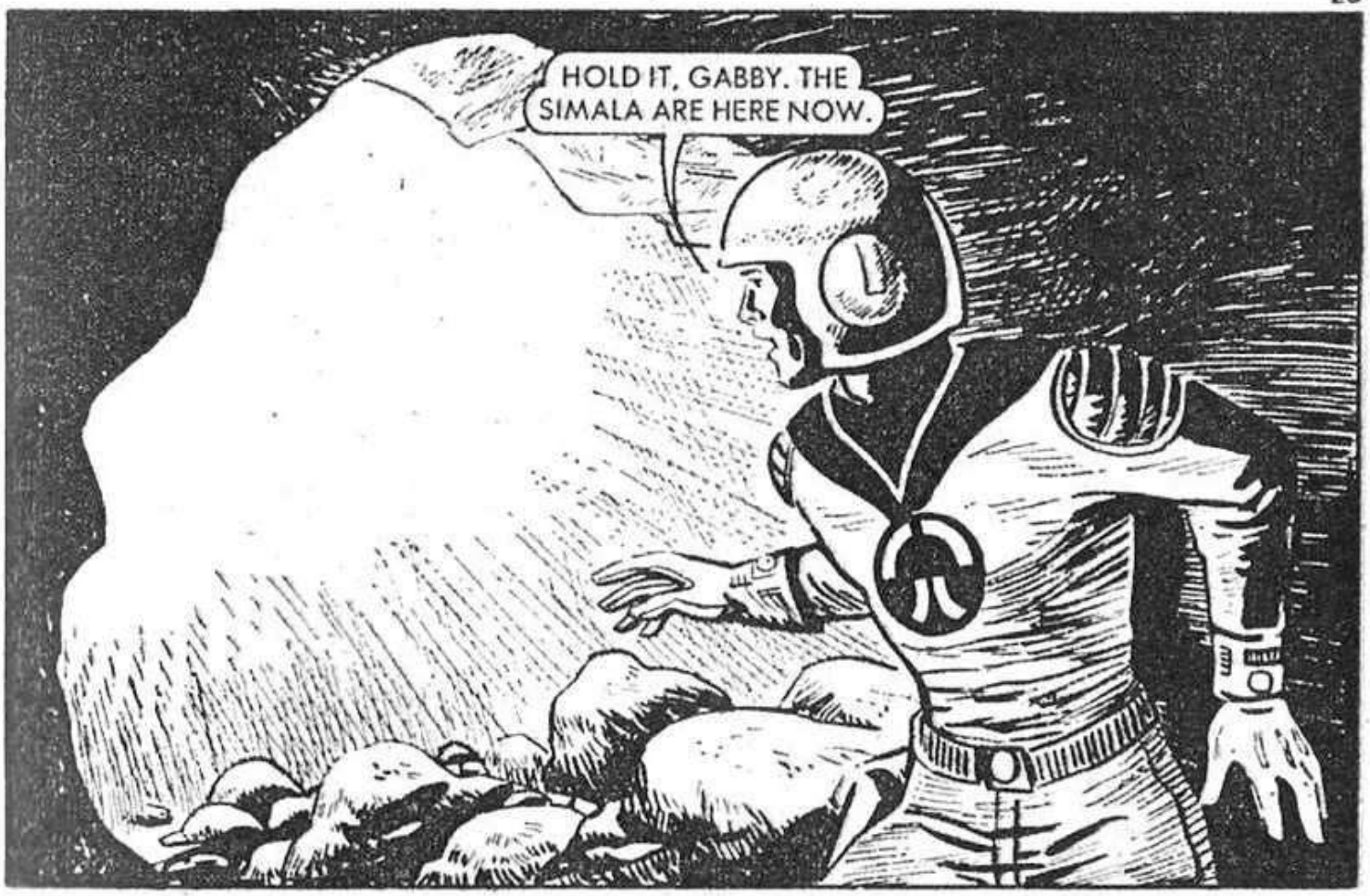
THERE IT IS . . . THERE WILL BE NO GUARDS BECAUSE THE SIMALA THINK THEY'VE CLEARED THE PLANET.

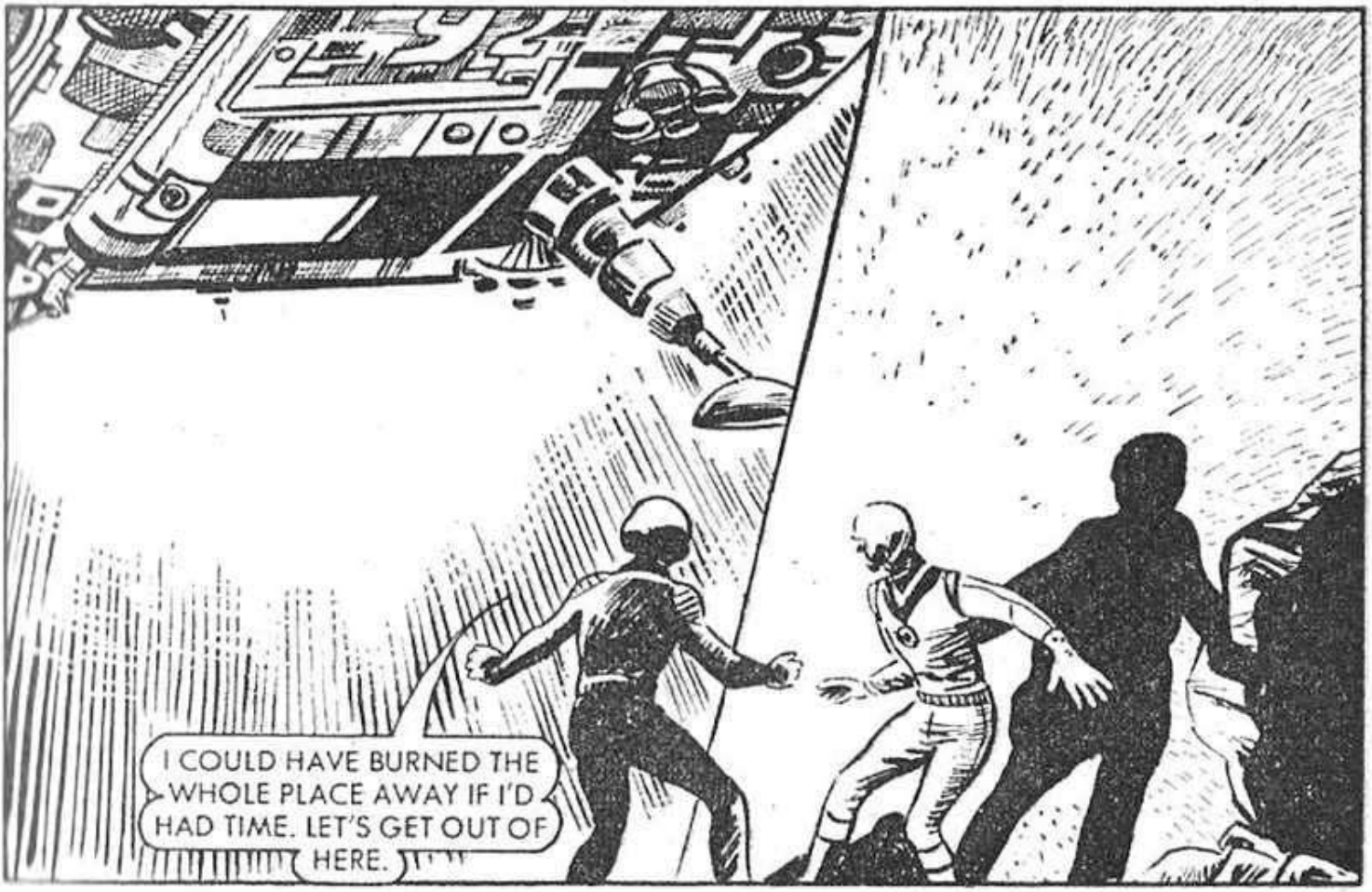
THE VIBRATION GREW STRONGER.
FEEL THAT VIBRATION. THERE ARE NO DOORS IN THAT THING.

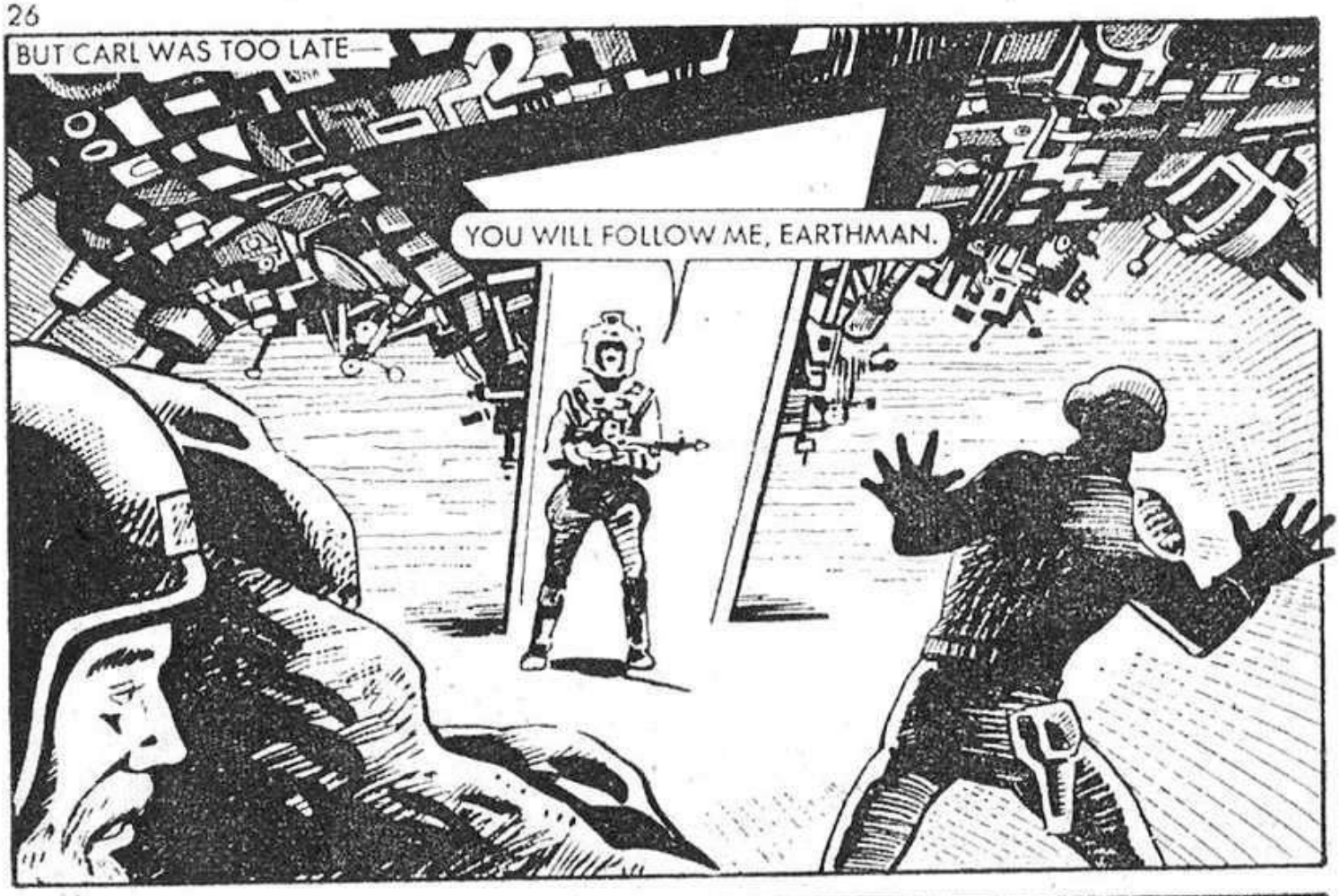
WE'LL SOON MAKE ONE!

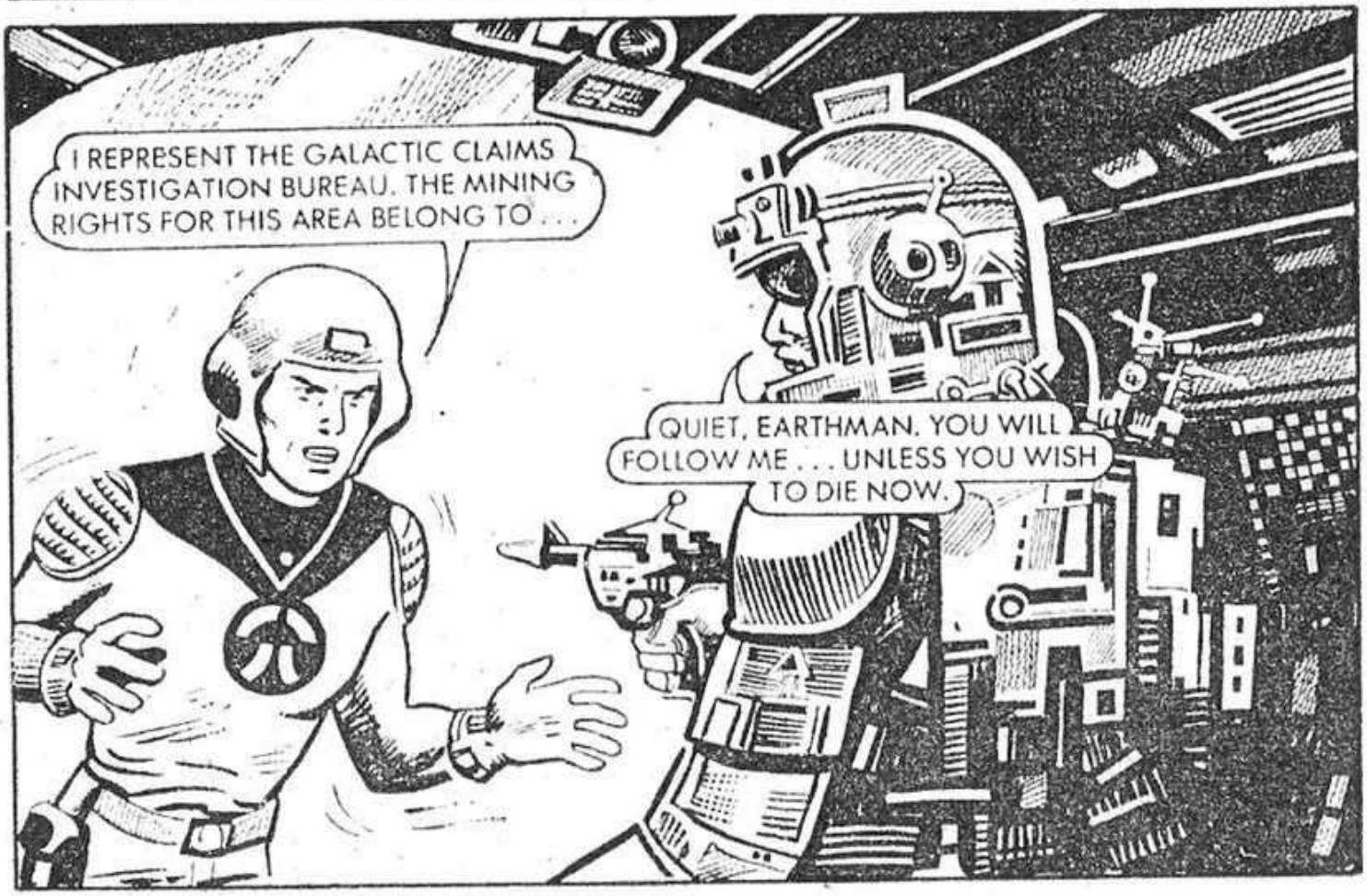

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF IT.
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TO STOP.


THAT'S DONE IT.
20

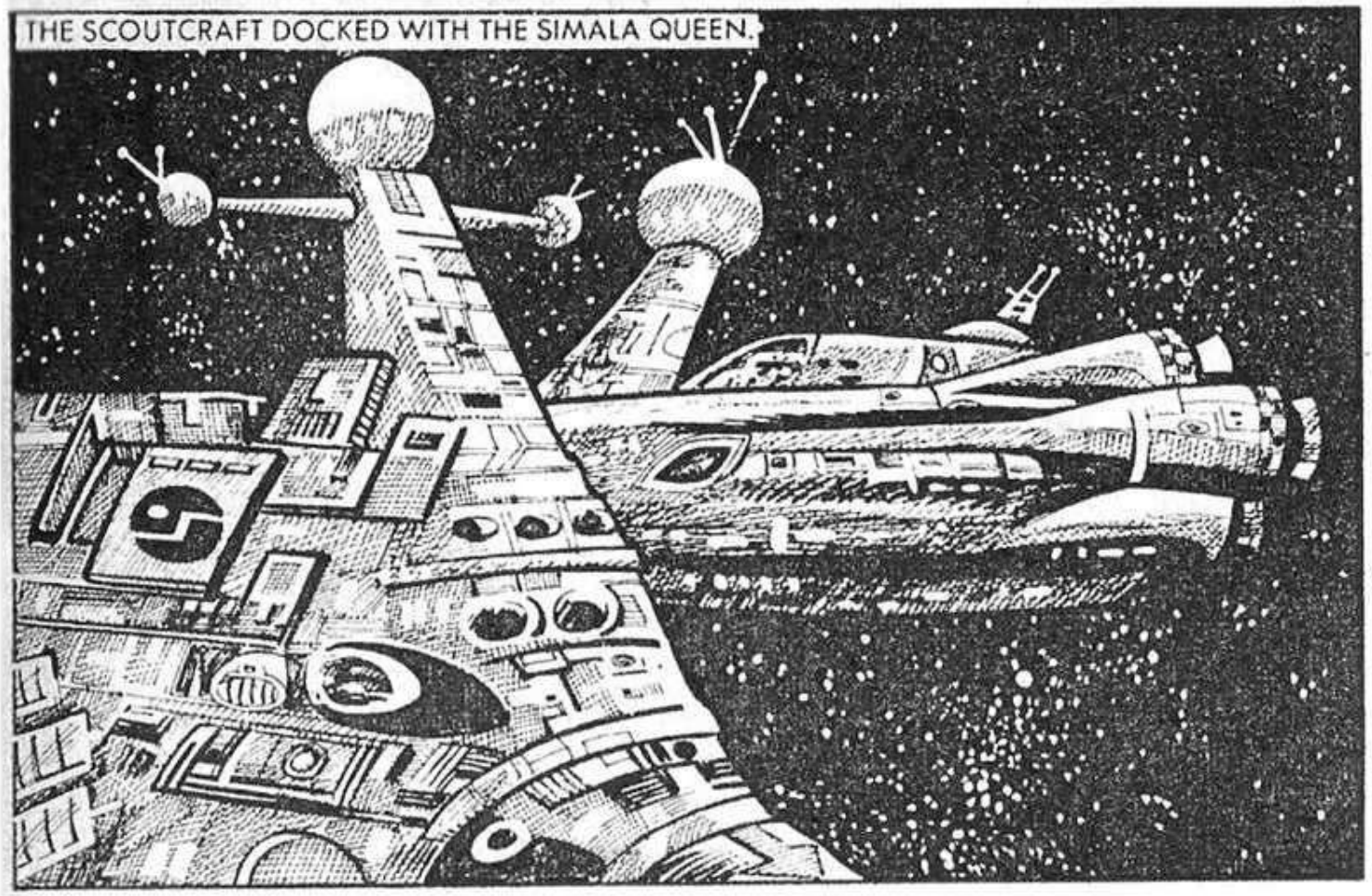

HOLD IT, GABBY. THE SIMALA ARE HERE NOW.


I COULD HAVE BURNED THE WHOLE PLACE AWAY IF I'D HAD TIME. LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

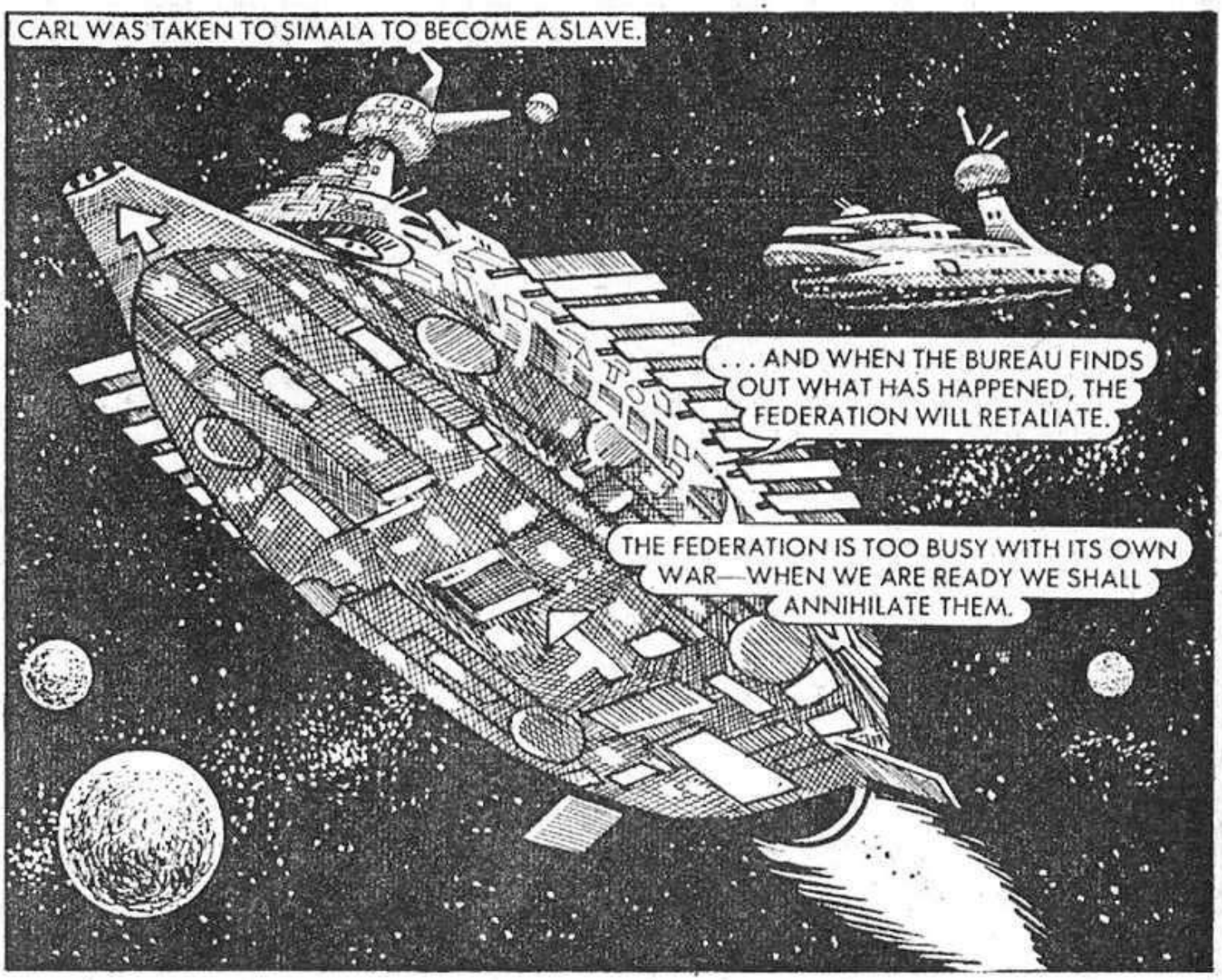

BUT CARL WAS TOO LATE—
YOU WILL FOLLOW ME, EARTHMAN.


I REPRESENT THE GALACTIC CLAIMS INVESTIGATION BUREAU. THE MINING RIGHTS FOR THIS AREA BELONG TO . . .
QUIET, EARTHMAN. YOU WILL FOLLOW ME . . . UNLESS YOU WISH TO DIE NOW.

BUT YOU CAN'T KILL ME, I AM . . .
WE WILL NOT KILL YOU, JUST REARRANGE YOUR BRAIN A LITTLE SO YOU WILL FIND WORKING FOR US A PLEASURE.

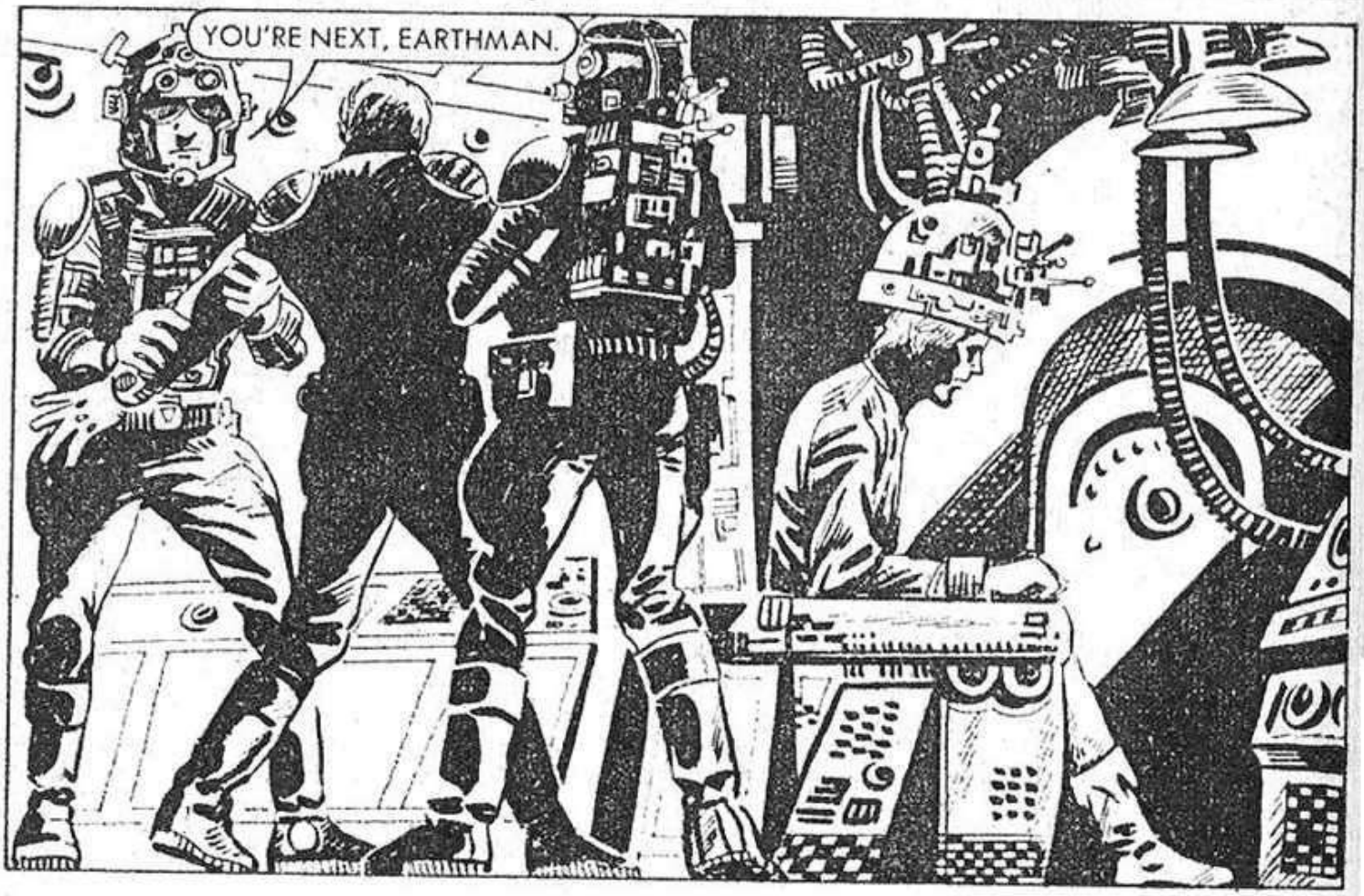

THE SCOUTCRAFT DOCKED WITH THE SIMALA QUEEN.

AT LEAST WE STOPPED YOUR MACHINE.
WE'LL SOON REPAIR THE DAMAGE— AND START AGAIN.


CARL WAS TAKEN TO SIMALA TO BECOME A SLAVE.
. . . AND WHEN THE BUREAU FINDS OUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED, THE FEDERATION WILL RETALIATE.
THE FEDERATION IS TOO BUSY WITH ITS OWN WAR—WHEN WE ARE READY WE SHALL ANNIHILATE THEM.

IN ONE GIANT GALACTIC JUMP, THE SLAVESHIP REACHED SIMALA.
IMPRESSED, EARTHMAN? OUR SHIPS CAN TRAVEL AT 90% LIGHT SPEED.

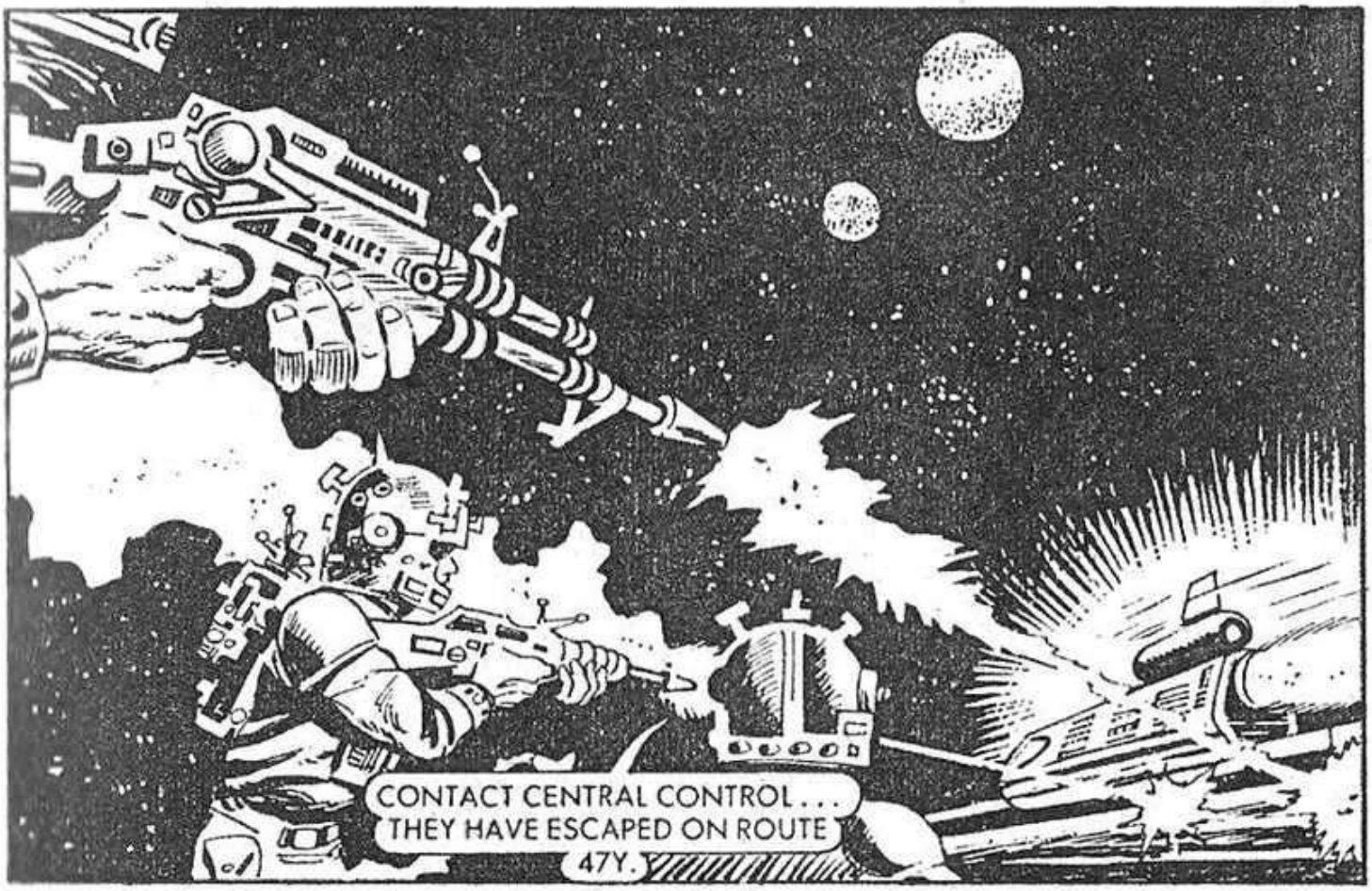
CARL WAS TAKEN STRAIGHT TO THE CEREBRAL CLEANSING STATION.
YOU PROMISED TO SAVE US . . . NOW YOU TAKE OUR MINDS AWAY.


YOU'RE NEXT, EARTHMAN.

BEFORE ANYTHING HAPPENED THE GUARDS WERE SHOT.
DIE, SIMALA DOG!

I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALL PRISONERS.
SOME OF US ESCAPED.
COME. WE MUST GO BEFORE THE SIMALA SEND MORE MEN.
ONTO THE HOVER CAR.

ACTIVATE POWER . . . SIMALA GUARDS ARE CLOSE.


CONTACT CENTRAL CONTROL . . . THEY HAVE ESCAPED ON ROUTE 47Y.

AFTER A HIGH-SPEED JOURNEY THE HOVER CAR STOPPED.
CAN WE ESCAPE FROM THIS PLACE?
THE CITY IS BUILT ON MOUNTAINOUS CRAGS. SO FAR WE HAVE FOUND NO WAY OUT.

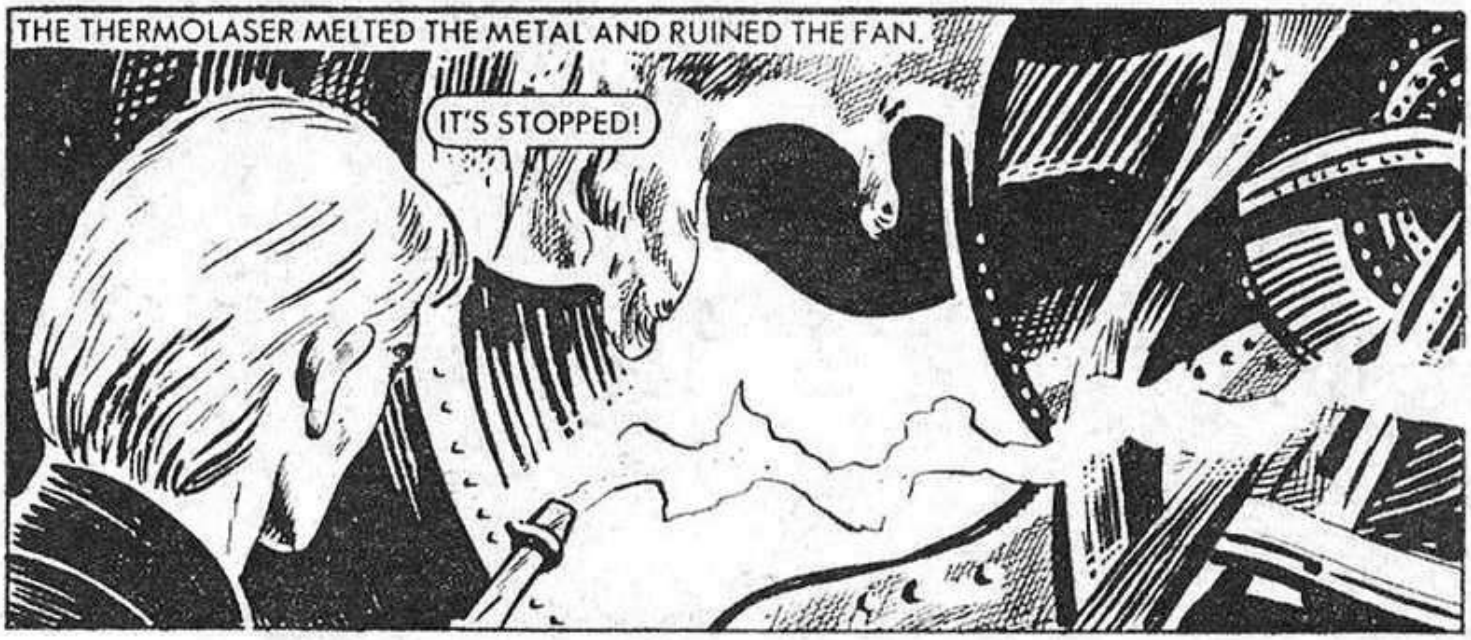
THIS LEADS TO THE MAINTENANCE DUCTS—THE SIMALA VERY RARELY COME DOWN HERE.
THIS AIR—IT MUST COME FROM SOMEWHERE.

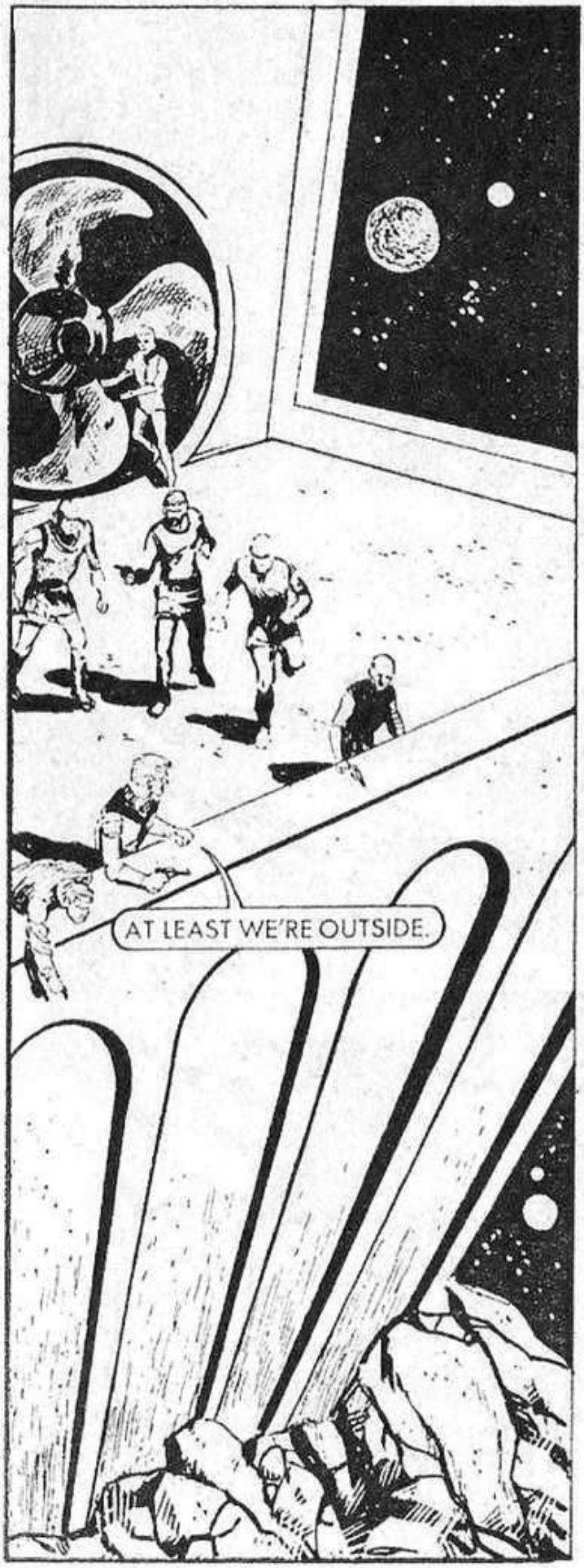
AFTER A LONG TRIP THROUGH VENTS, THEY ARRIVED AT A TEMPORARY BASE.
WE RESCUED KING IRUN, BUT HE IS STILL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE MIND MACHINE.
SHOW ME WHERE THE AIR COMES FROM.

THIS IS WHERE THE AIR ENTERS.
THERE'S A FAN BLOCKING THE WAY.

I CAN'T FIND A SWITCH, NOT EVEN A WIRE.
HAND ME THAT BLASTER.

I HOPE THE FAN MELTS—AND DOESN'T BREAK.


THE THERMOLASER MELTED THE METAL AND RUINED THE FAN.
IT'S STOPPED!


AT LEAST WE'RE OUTSIDE.

THERE'S SOMEONE COMING UP THE AIR PASSAGE BEHIND US.
IT'S SIMALA GUARDS.

A SIMALA GUNSHIP SWOOPED DOWN.
WE'RE TRAPPED—THEY'RE COMING AT US FROM BOTH SIDES.

ON PETRULA, McFLYNN WAS RETURNING TO CARL'S SHIP.
THE WARPER'S STARTED AGAIN. I'VE GOT TO HURRY.

EARTHQUAKES NOW!

IF I DON'T REACH THE SHIP I'LL BE A GONER.
GABBY COMPLETED THE JOURNEY ON FOOT.
HERE . . . AT LAST.

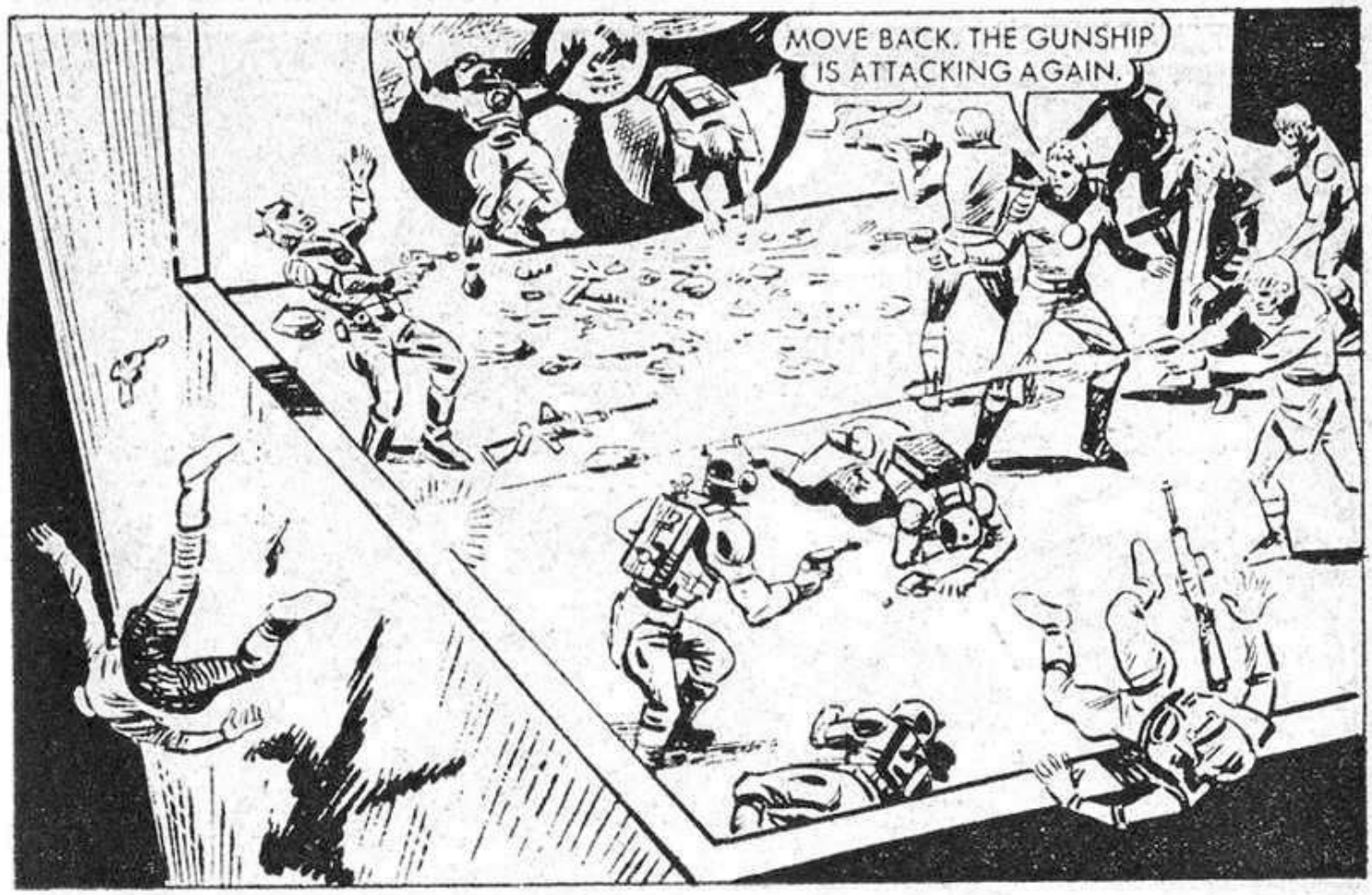
GABBY ACTIVATED THE EMERGENCY BLAST OFF SEQUENCE.

HE BLASTED AWAY JUST AS PETRULA BEGAN TO SPLIT APART.

MEANWHILE, CARL AND THE PETRULANS PREPARED TO FIGHT THE SIMALA.
WATCH FOR THE GUNSHIP!
GET READY TO FIRE!

YOU WILL DROP YOUR WEAPONS.

THEY'VE MISSED—QUICK, BEFORE THEY RECOVER!


MOVE BACK. THE GUNSHIP IS ATTACKING AGAIN.

THEY'VE GOT US IN THEIR SIGHTS. THEY WON'T MISS THIS TIME.
THE GUNSHIP PREPARED TO FIRE.

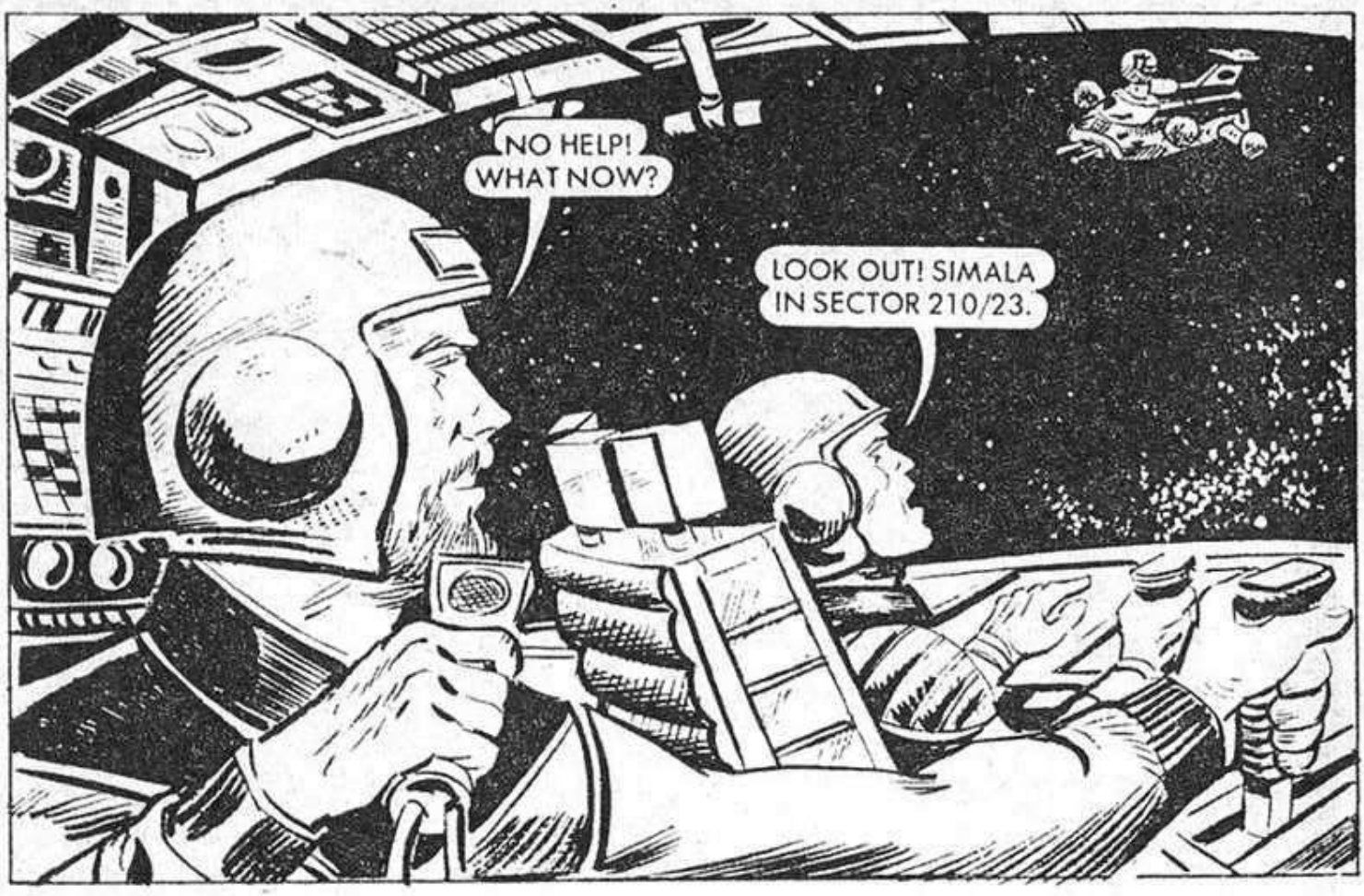
A SECOND SHIP APPEARED.
IT'S MY SHIP! IT MUST BE McFLYNN!

McFLYNN TOUCHED DOWN.
McFLYNN, YOU OLD FOOL. GOOD JOB YOU CAME.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

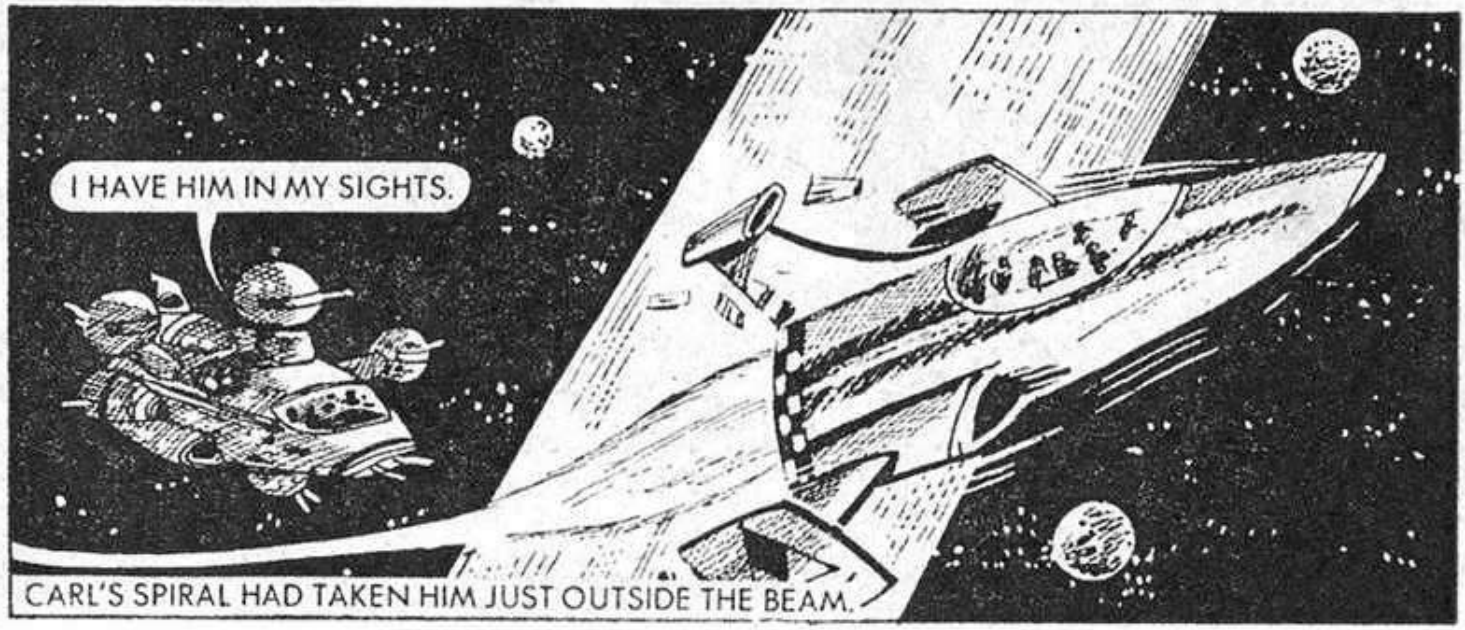
THE FEDERATION WILL HAVE TO HELP US NOW. HAVE YOU GOT THROUGH, McFLYNN?
YES! I CONTRACTED THEM . . . THE REPLY'S DUE.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE REJECTED. ALL MY SHIPS ARE SHORT OF FUEL . . . AND LOW ON NUCLEAR COOLANT. WE'LL EITHER RUN OUT OF FUEL—OR BLOW UP.


NO HELP! WHAT NOW?
LOOK OUT! SIMALA IN SECTOR 210/23.

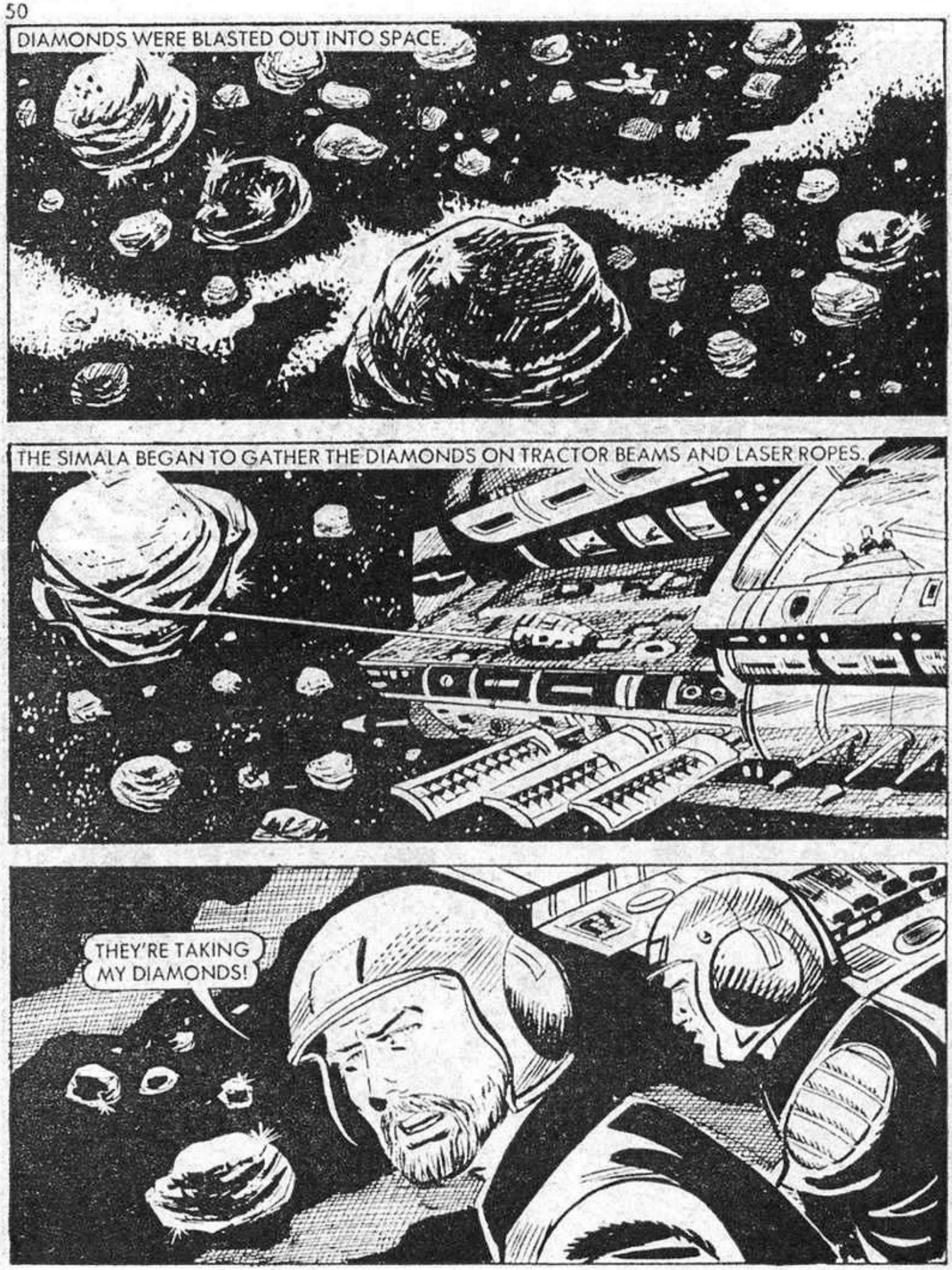
WE'LL HAVE TO RUN. WE CAN'T TURN AND FIGHT WITH ALL THESE PEOPLE ON BOARD.

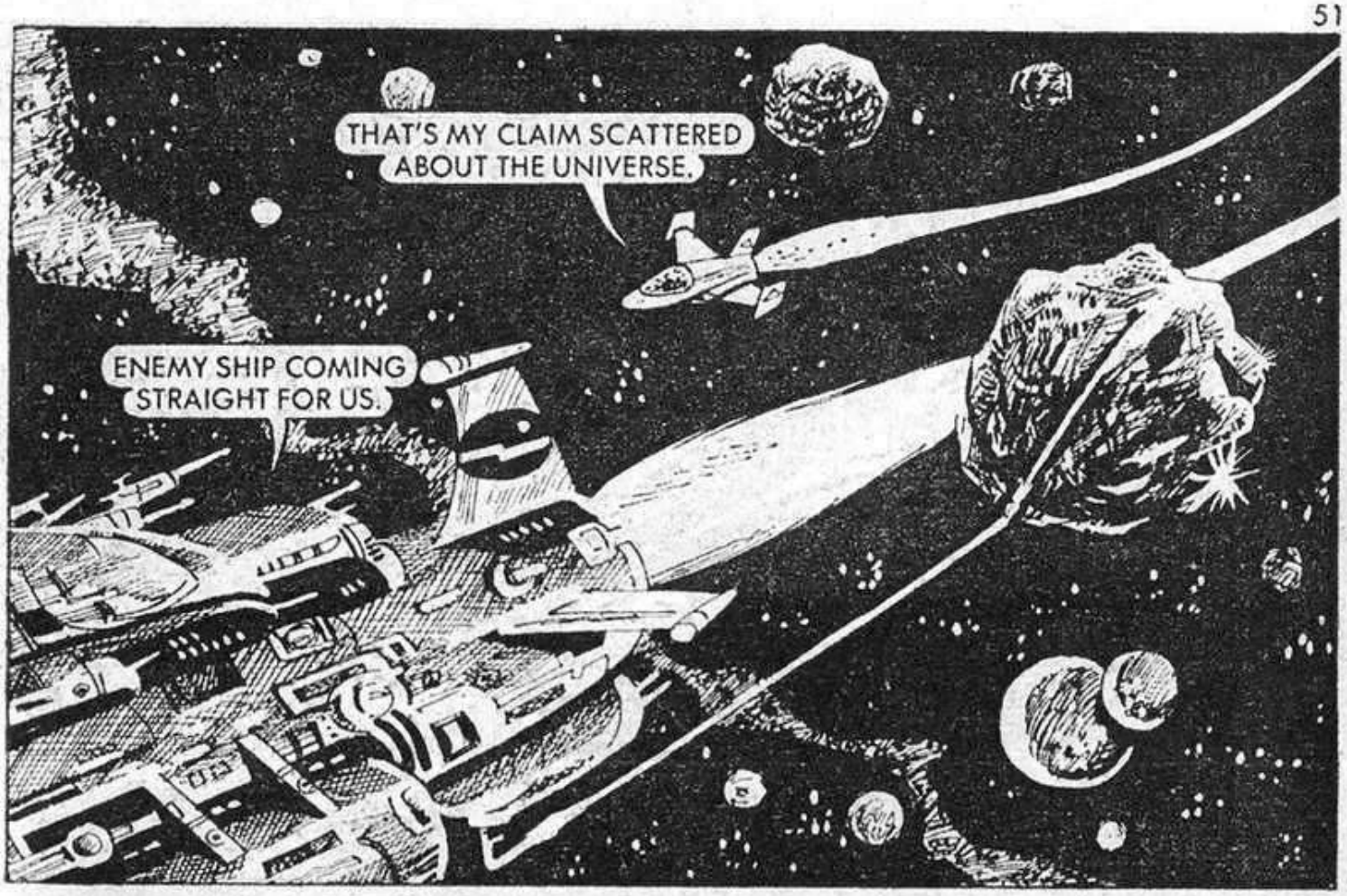
IF THAT FIGHTER FOLLOWS ME, IT SHOULD CROSS THE WARPER BEAM AND . . .


I HAVE HIM IN MY SIGHTS.
CARL'S SPIRAL HAD TAKEN HIM JUST OUTSIDE THE BEAM.

BUT THE SIMALA SHIP PLOUGHED STRAIGHT IN.
GET OUT OF HERE! THE DIAMOND SUN'S CRACKING . . . IT'S GOING TO SHAKE ITSELF TO BITS ANY SECOND.

WHAT A BLAST!


DIAMONDS WERE BLASTED OUT INTO SPACE.
THE SIMALA BEGAN TO GATHER THE DIAMONDS ON TRACTOR BEAMS AND LASER ROPES.
THEY'RE TAKING MY DIAMONDS!


THAT'S MY CLAIM SCATTERED ABOUT THE UNIVERSE.
ENEMY SHIP COMING STRAIGHT FOR US.

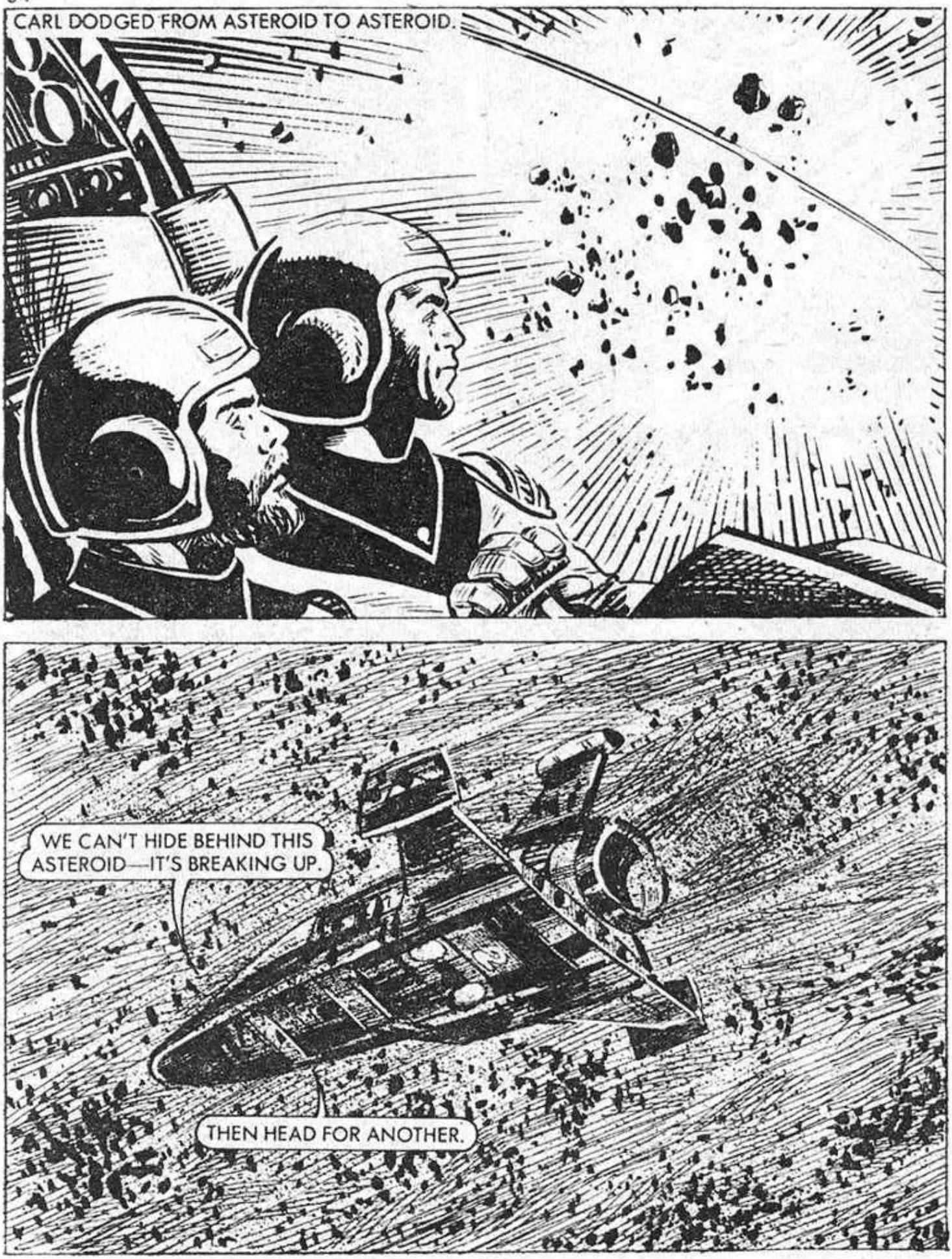
STEADY ON, GABBY.

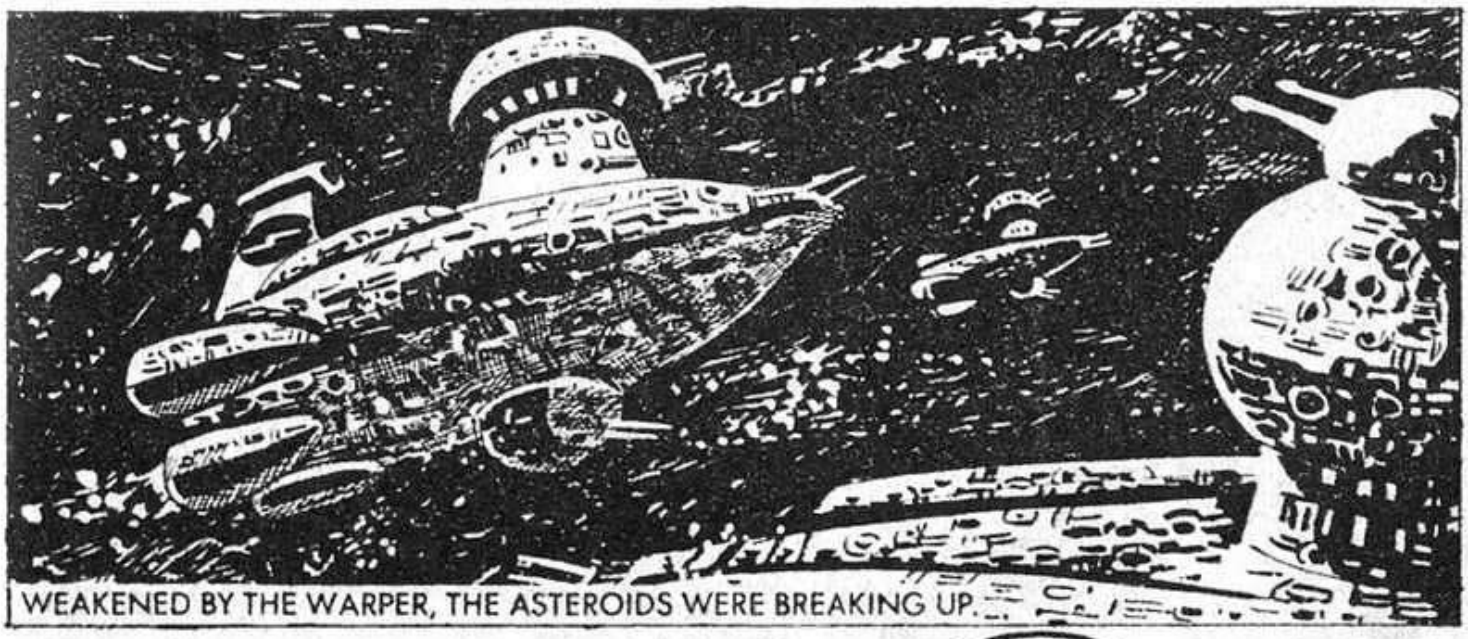
THAT'S DONE IT! NOW THEY'LL ALL ATTACK US.

LV8 HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY ENEMY ATTACK.
LV1 TO FLEET— SEEK AND DESTROY.

HE'S BEHIND THAT FRAGMENT!

MISSED! HEAD FOR ANOTHER ASTEROID.

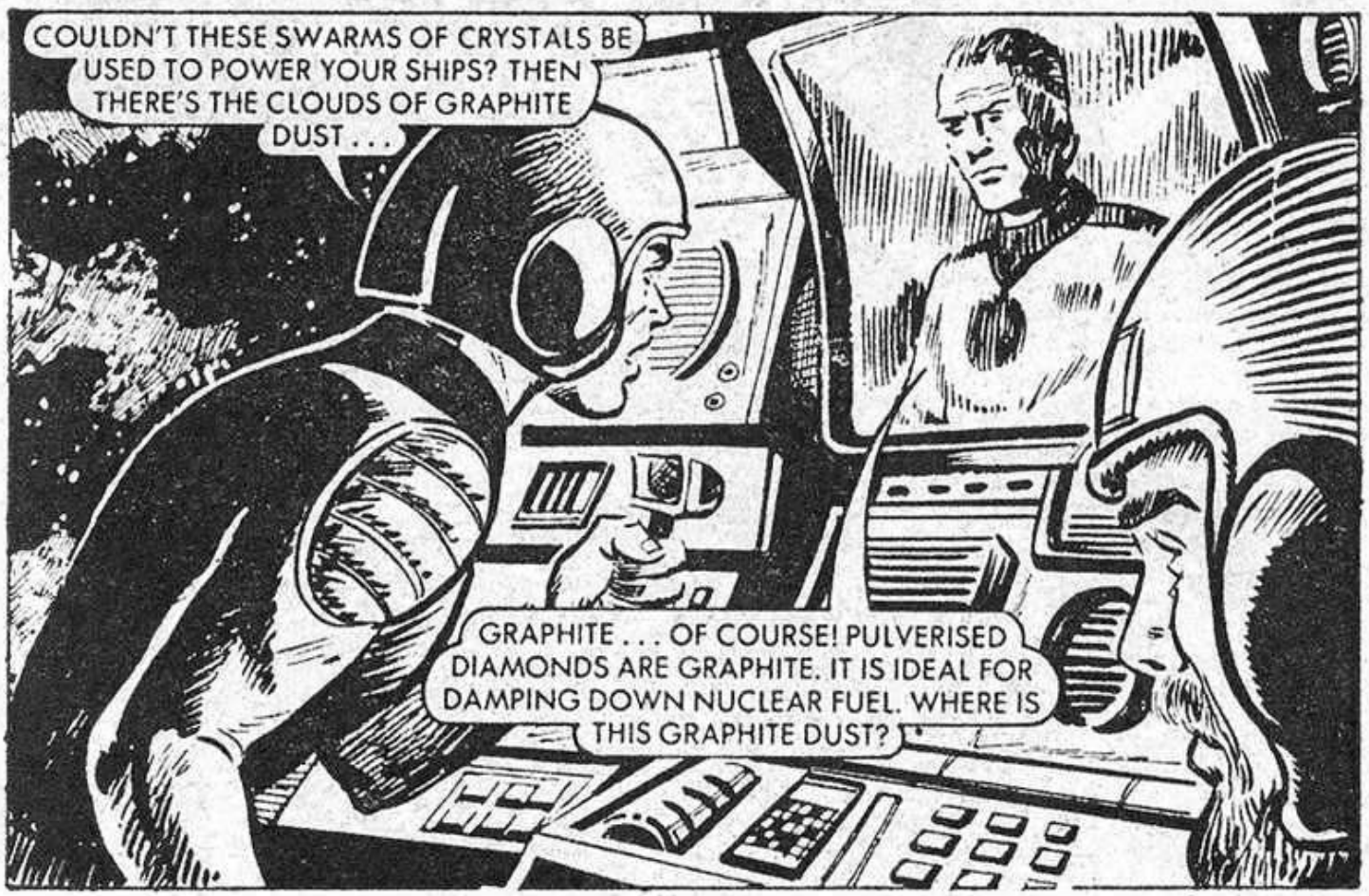

CARL DODGED FROM ASTEROID TO ASTEROID.
WE CAN'T HIDE BEHIND THIS ASTEROID—IT'S BREAKING UP.
THEN HEAD FOR ANOTHER.


WEAKENED BY THE WARPER, THE ASTEROIDS WERE BREAKING UP.

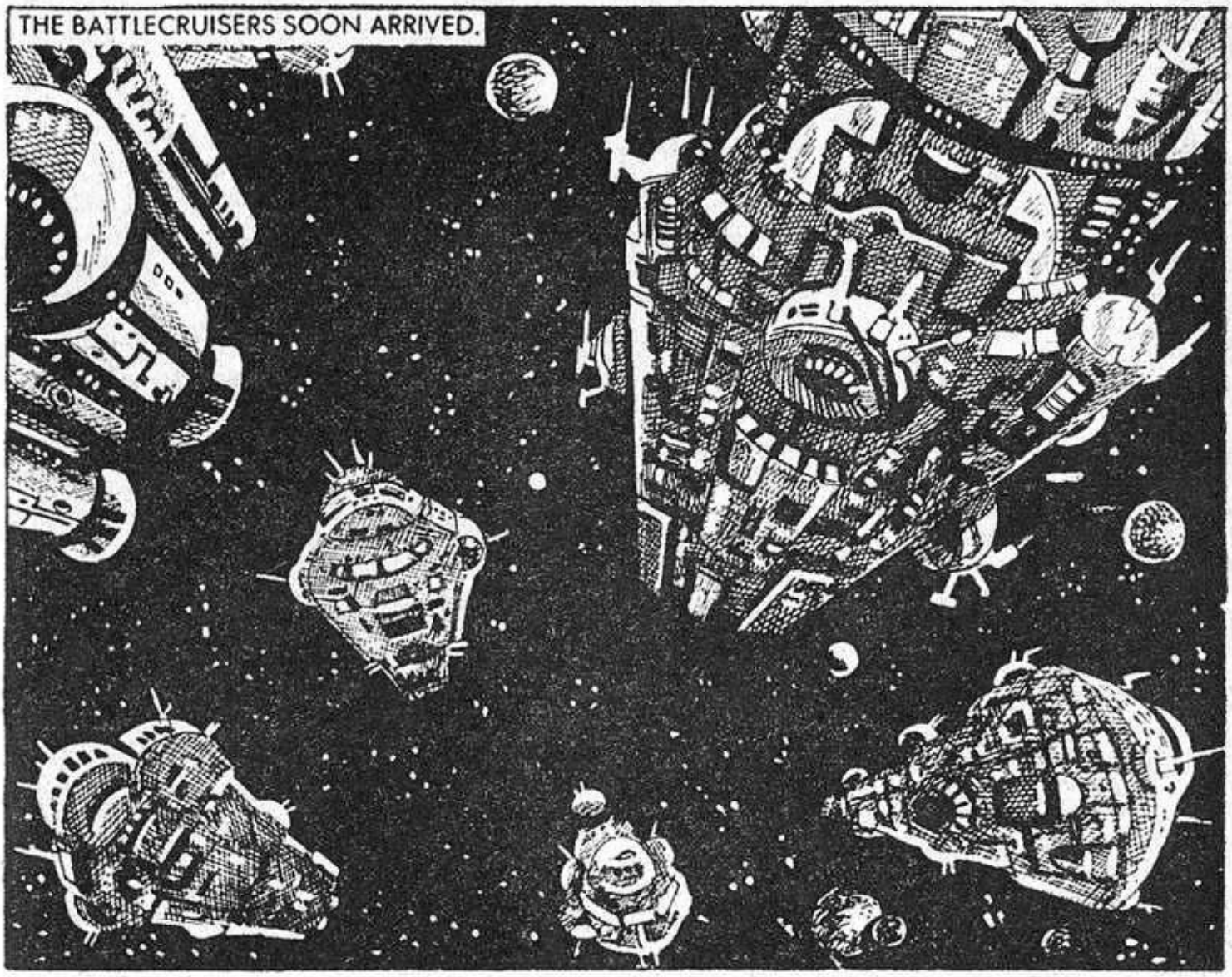
THE SIMALA CAN HARDLY SEE US NOW.
THE DIAMONDS ARE BREAKING DOWN EVEN FURTHER.

THE DIAMOND ASTEROIDS—THEY'VE CHANGED TO DUST AND SMALL CRYSTALS.

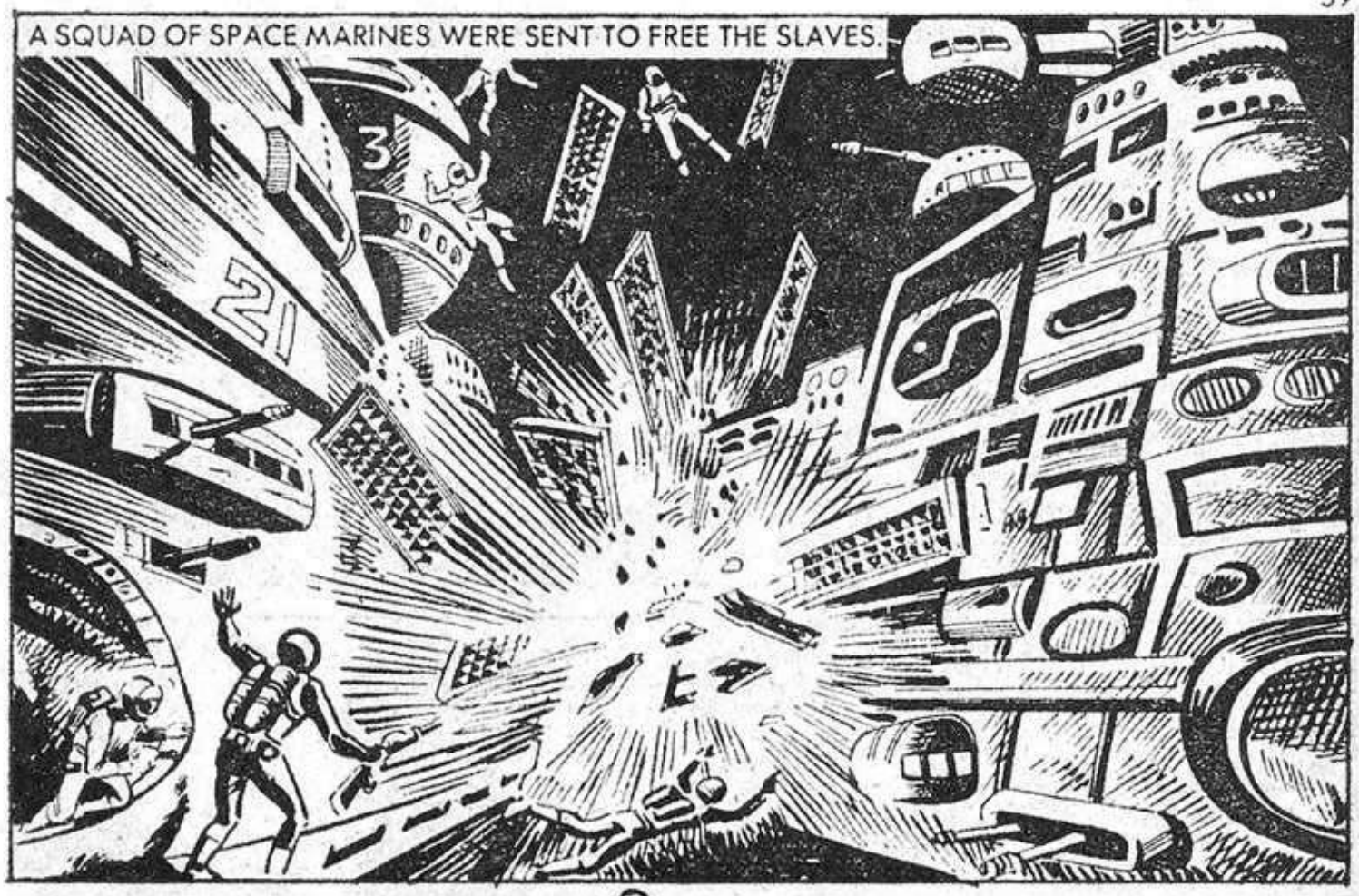
GABBY CONTACTED SPACE FEDERATION TO INFORM THEM OF THEIR DIRE SITUATION . . .
. . . THEY'VE DESTROYED A SUN, AND THAT MEANS PETRULA WILL DIE . . . AND THEY'VE MADE A MESS OF MY CLAIM . . .
. . . I'M SORRY! . . . I HAVE A FUEL CRISIS ON MY HANDS . . . IF I CAN'T FIND A SOLUTION, THE FEDERATION WILL FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE ATEV WARLORDS.

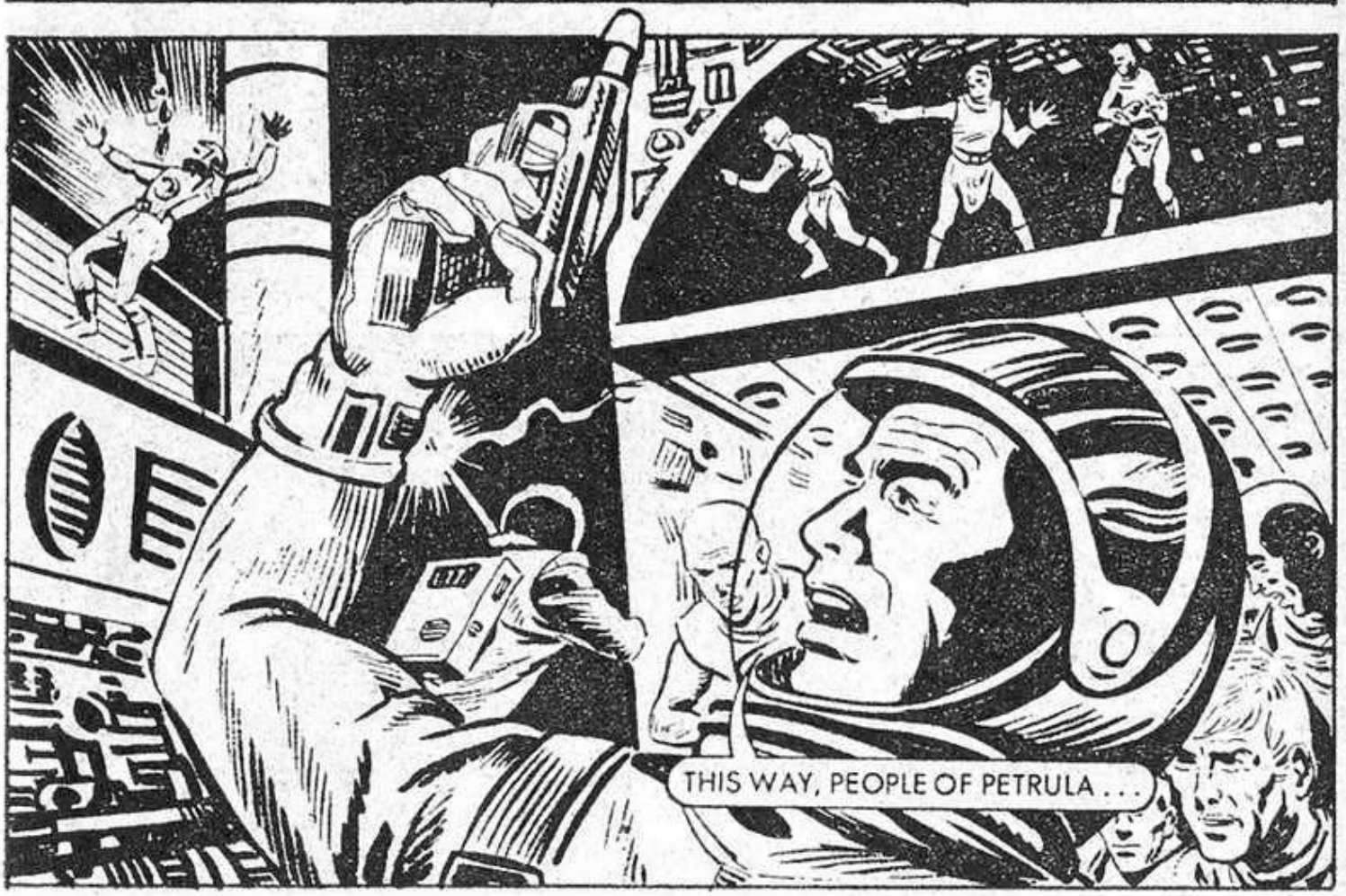

COULDN'T THESE SWARMS OF CRYSTALS BE USED TO POWER YOUR SHIPS? THEN THERE'S THE CLOUDS OF GRAPHITE DUST . . .
GRAPHITE . . . OF COURSE! PULVERISED DIAMONDS ARE GRAPHITE. IT IS IDEAL FOR DAMPING DOWN NUCLEAR FUEL. WHERE IS THIS GRAPHITE DUST?

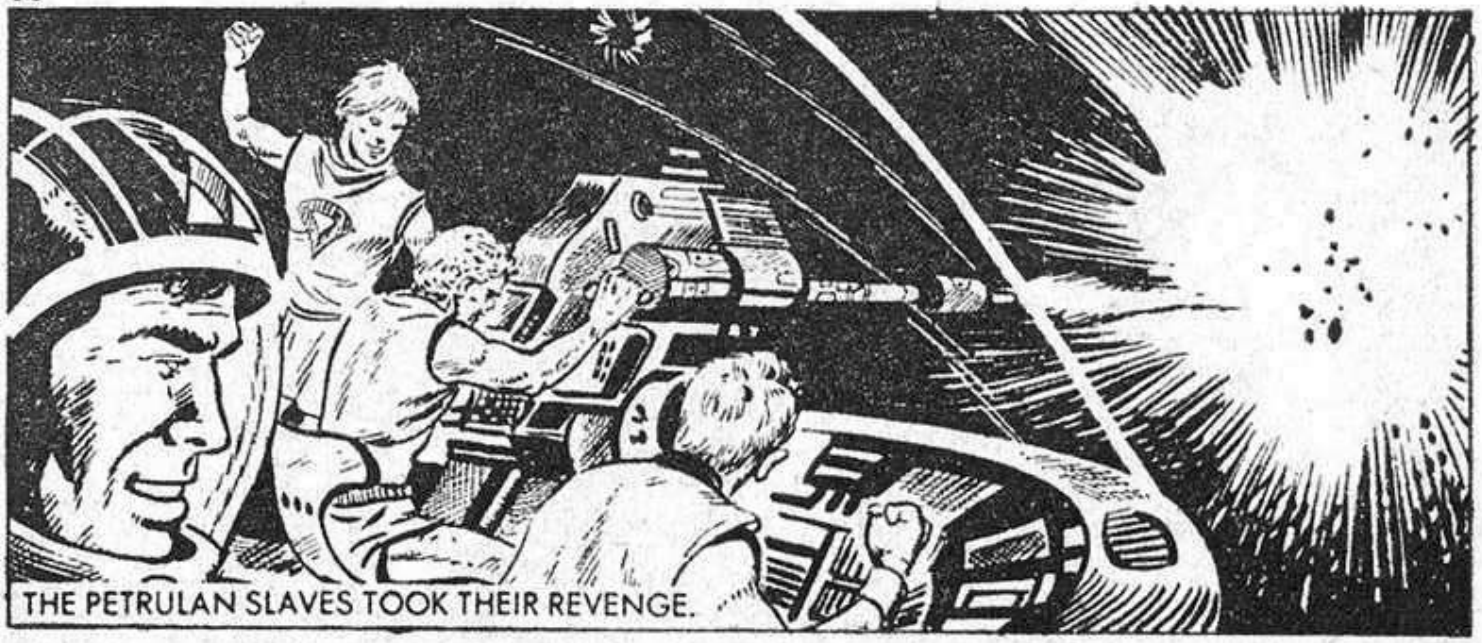
SEND SHIPS TO RESCUE THE PETRULANS AND I'LL TELL YOU WHERE IT IS.
VERY WELL. I'LL SEND SIX BATTLECRUISERS.


THE BATTLECRUISERS SOON ARRIVED.

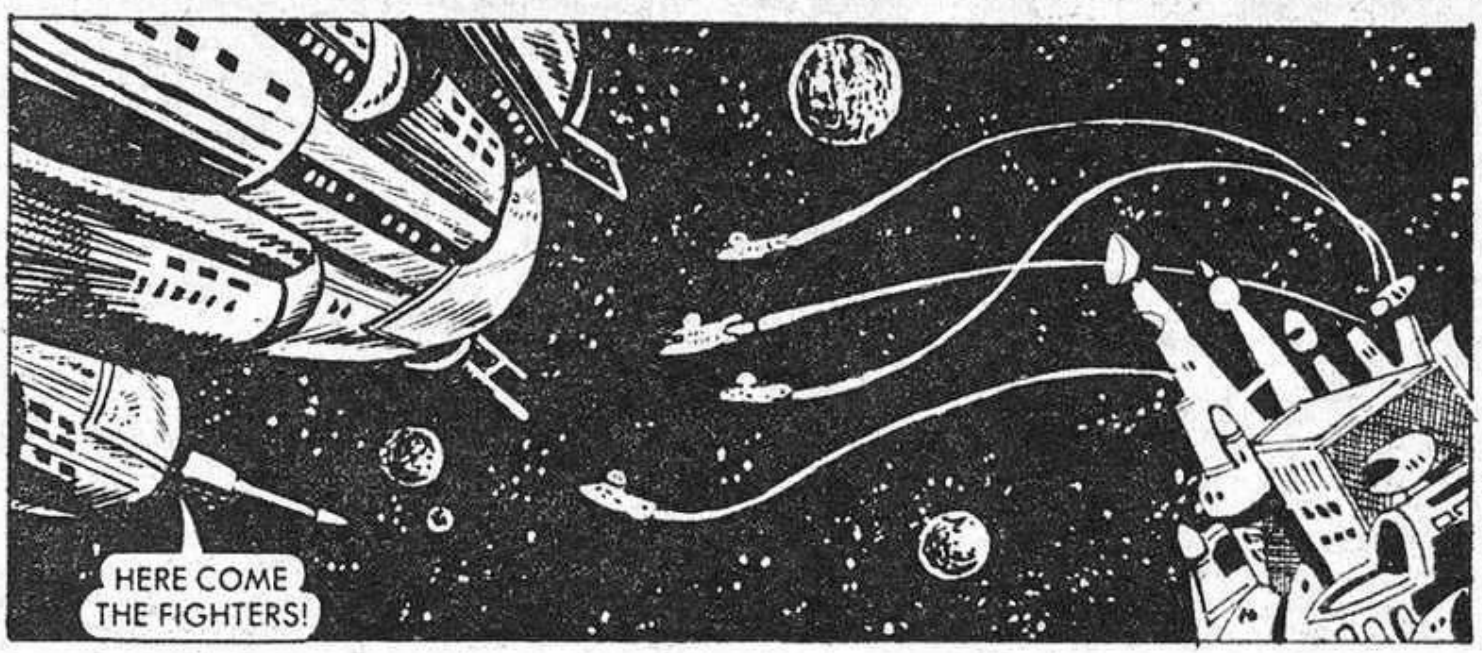
THE BATTLECRUISERS MADE SHORT WORK OF THE SIMALA FLEET.


A SQUAD OF SPACE MARINES WERE SENT TO FREE THE SLAVES.
3
21

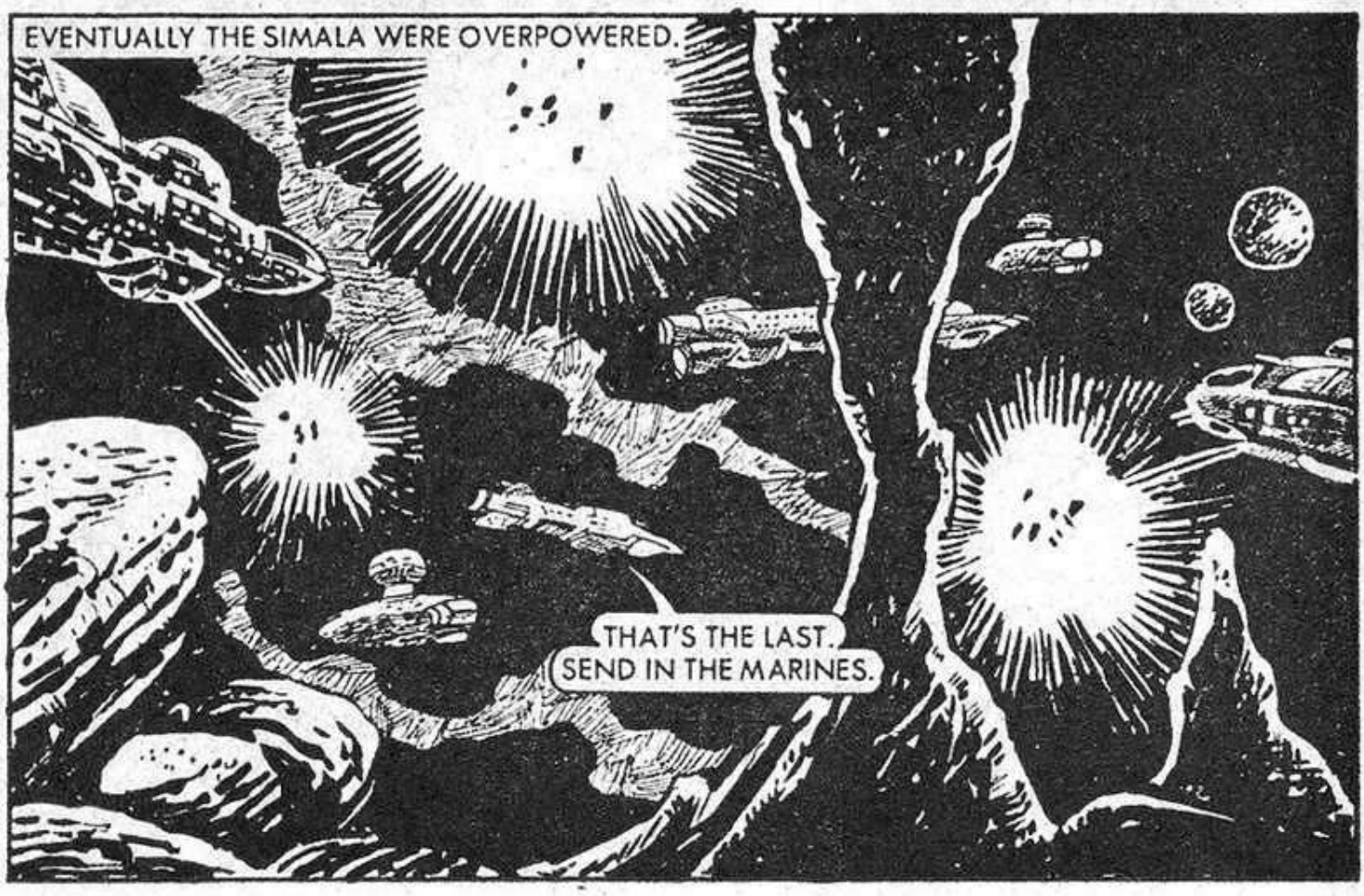

THIS WAY, PEOPLE OF PETRULA . . .


THE PETRULAN SLAVES TOOK THEIR REVENGE.

PREPARE FOR THE LAST BATTLE— AGAINST SIMALA ITSELF!


HERE COME THE FIGHTERS!

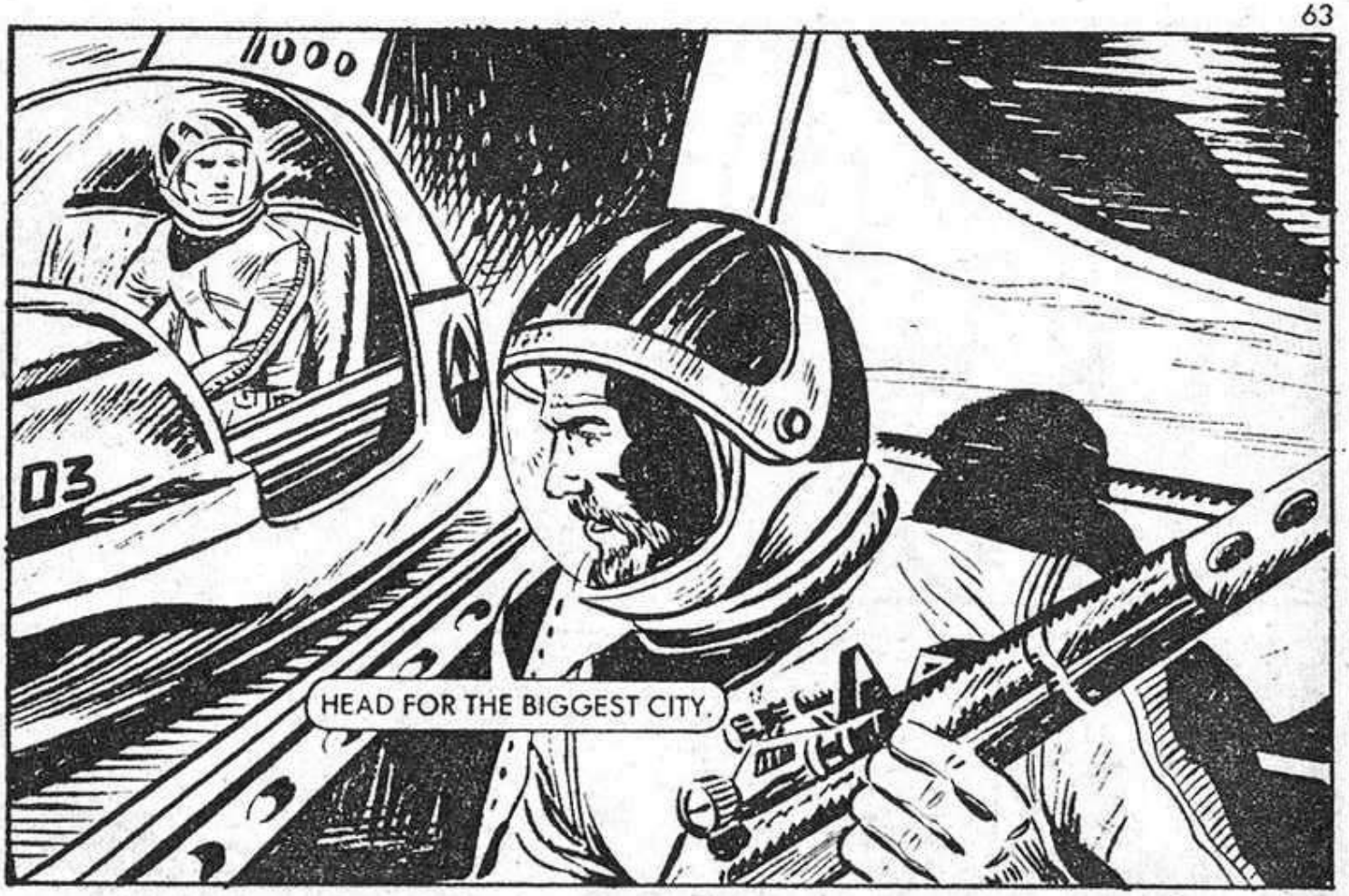
THE FIGHT RAGED IN THE DARK SKIES ABOVE SIMALA.


EVENTUALLY THE SIMALA WERE OVERPOWERED.
THAT'S THE LAST. SEND IN THE MARINES.

THE MARINES ATTACKED THE SIMALA TROOPERS.

SLOWLY THE SIMALA WERE DRIVEN BACK.

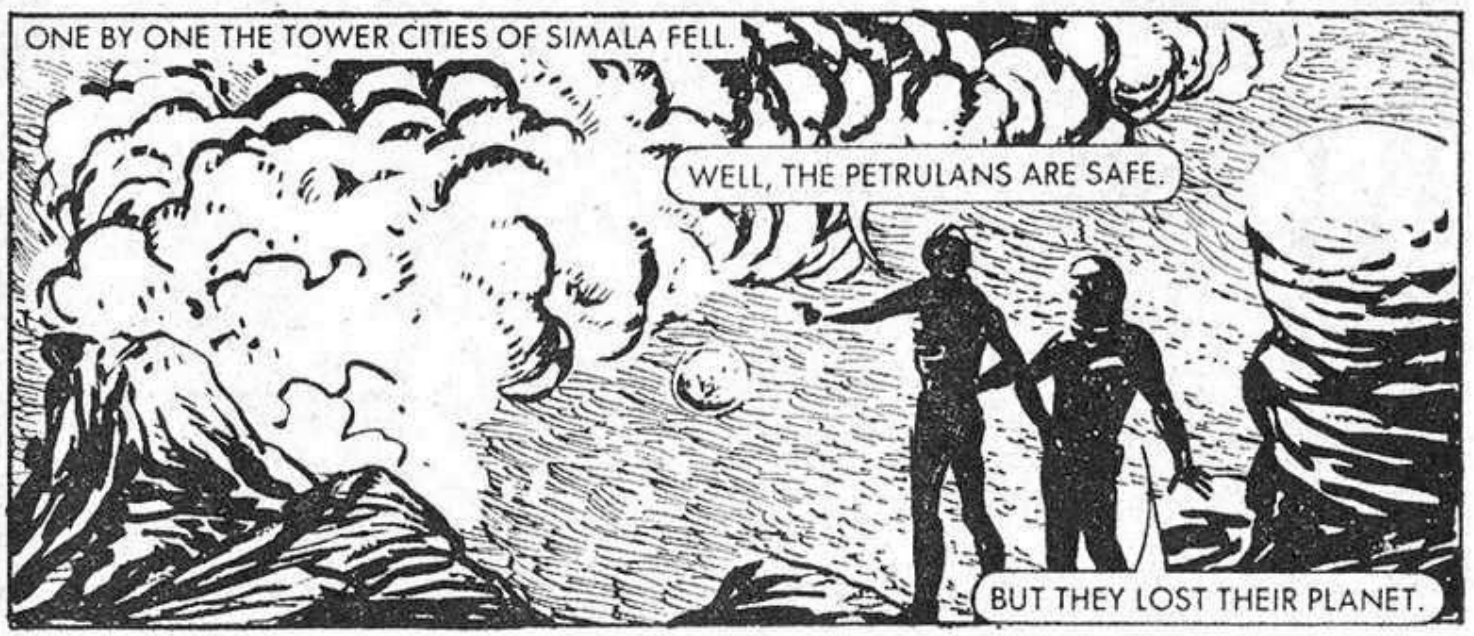
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DEFEAT THE SIMALA FOR GOOD.
DESTROY THEIR CITIES!

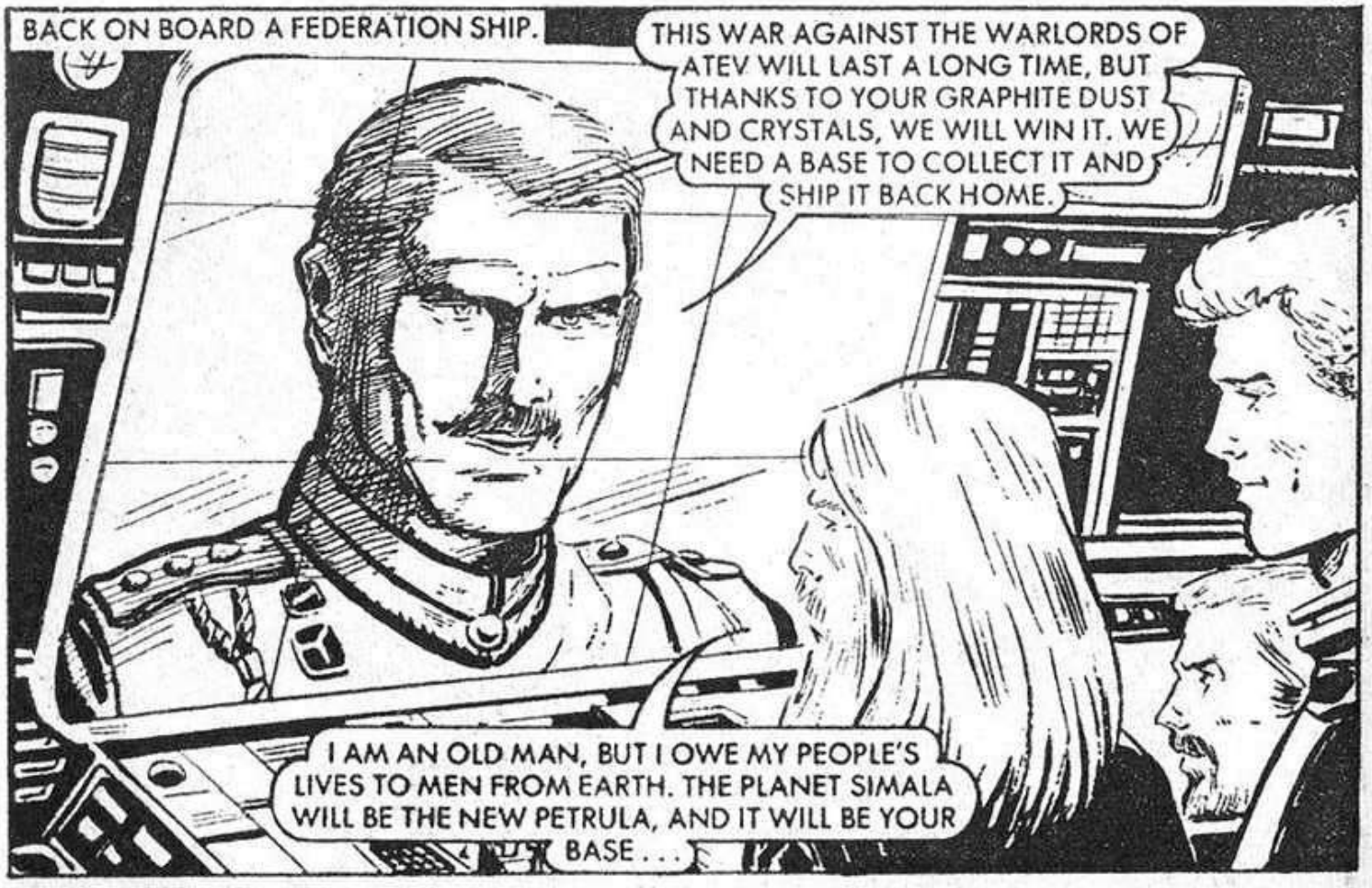

1000
03
HEAD FOR THE BIGGEST CITY.

WITH FIGHTING STILL GOING ON, GABBY AND CARL PLACED NEUTRON DESTRUCT CHARGES.

GET GOING . . . THE CITY WILL BLOW ANY SECOND.

BY THE STARS! WHAT DID YOU USE?
OH, JUST AN OLD MINER'S TRICK—A FEW NEUTRON CHARGES DETONATED BY A THERMAL TORCH. CREATES A LOT OF HEAT. THERE'LL BE DUST ONLY LEFT HERE.

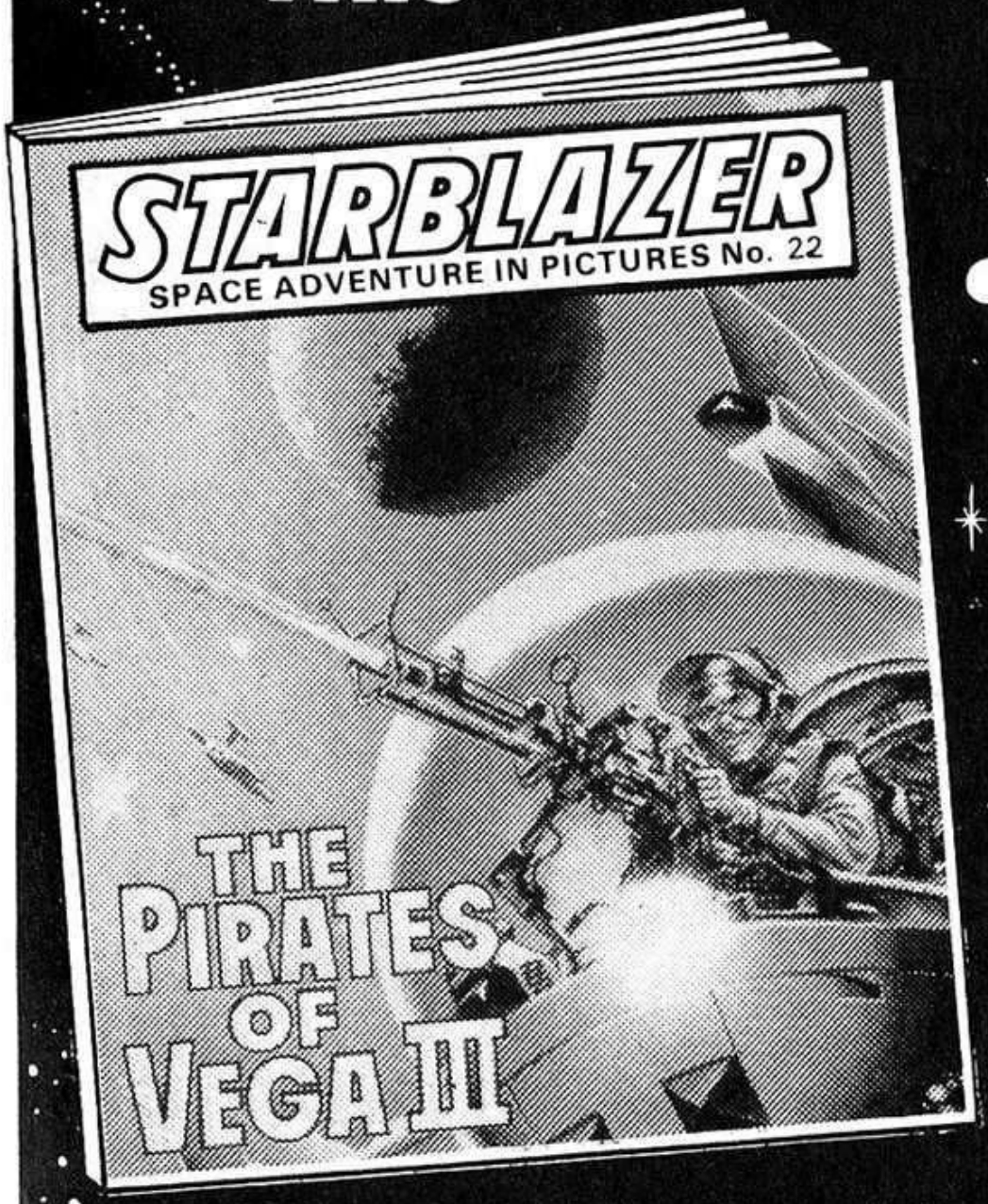

ONE BY ONE THE TOWER CITIES OF SIMALA FELL.
WELL, THE PETRULANS ARE SAFE.
BUT THEY LOST THEIR PLANET.


BACK ON BOARD A FEDERATION SHIP.
THIS WAR AGAINST THE WARLORDS OF ATEV WILL LAST A LONG TIME, BUT THANKS TO YOUR GRAPHITE DUST AND CRYSTALS, WE WILL WIN IT. WE NEED A BASE TO COLLECT IT AND SHIP IT BACK HOME.
I AM AN OLD MAN, BUT I OWE MY PEOPLE'S LIVES TO MEN FROM EARTH. THE PLANET SIMALA WILL BE THE NEW PETRULA, AND IT WILL BE YOUR BASE . . .

CARL SEEBURG . . . YOU ARE TO BE SWORN IN AS FEDERATION AMBASSADOR TO SIMALA, THE NEW PETRULA. McFLYNN, YOUR CRYSTALS AND GRAPHITE ARE WORTH A FORTUNE, AND YOU WON'T NEED TO SPEND ANY MORE TIME SCRATCHING FOR A LIVING. YOU CAN COME HOME A RICH MAN.
I GUESS THAT'S SO . . .

Printed and Published in Great Britain by D.C. THOMSON & CO. LTD.,
185 Fleet Street, London, EC4A 2HS. © D.C. THOMSON & CO. LTD., 1980.

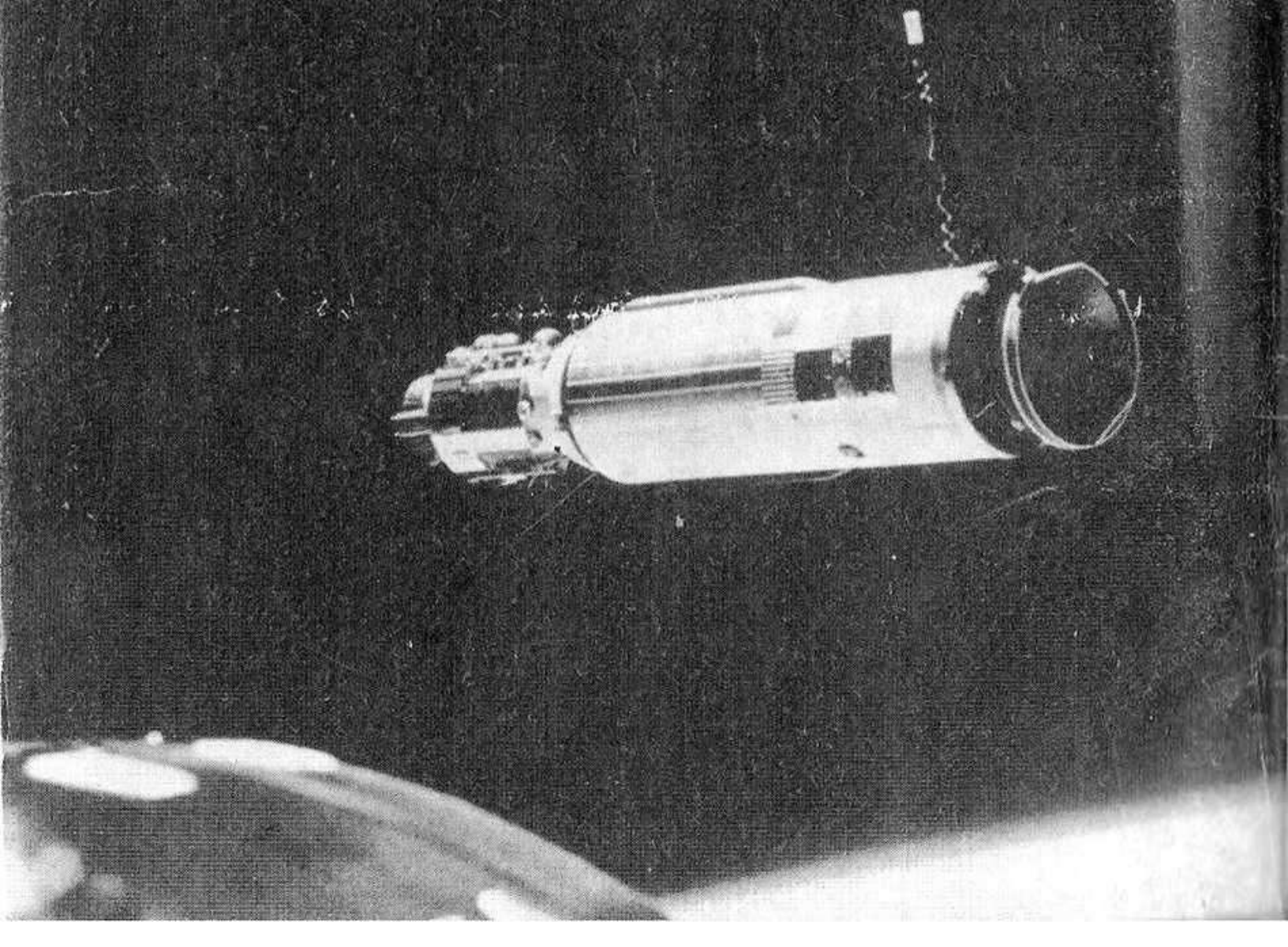
NOW THAT YOU'VE READ THIS



DON'T FORGET THAT THERE'S ANOTHER ONE THIS MONTH

IT'S ON SALE IN YOUR NEWSAGENT'S NOW!

STARBLAZERS

IN THE CONQUEST OF SPACE 23

Gemini 8 was launched on 16th March 1966. Already in orbit was an Agena rocket. The job of the Gemini crew, Neil Armstrong and David Scott, was to rendezvous with the Agena and join up with it. The docking was a success, although the astronauts had to make an emergency return soon afterwards. Here the approach to the rendezvous is seen.